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NEW STATESMAN

Housing Bill analysed

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Which among you, if his son ask for bread, will give him a school dinner?

Delhi Notebook: the dictator returns

A portrait of Labour's rank & file

Russia: the good soldier Kazis Zdancjavicius

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NEW STATESMAN
Volume 99 11 January 1980 No 2547

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Afghanistan and the Game of Superpowers

REAL PEOPLE are dying, and real things being destroyed, as the Soviet armour adds Kabul to a list of battle-honours already enriched with the names of Budapest and Prague. Nobody, though, should be allowed to get away with adding the mystical body of 'detente' to the list of meaningful casualties. Detente is never in the best of health; it may be questioned whether its occasional bouts of vivacity ever do the world much good; and its most recent incarnation came effectively to an end with the *entente indochinoise* between China and America. The tragedy of Afghanistan merely allows an overdue burial to take place with the maximum amount of ritual bugle-calls and shield-banging. It is, of course, not impossible that the superpowers might chance to touch off a major war – perhaps even *the* war – while playing to the gallery. But that has been a condition of our lives for some time now, and not one which will change if Kabul gets down again to being a single-column filler.

As usual, there's no shortage of black comedy. Margaret Thatcher has managed to get somewhat out in front of the Americans she purports to be supporting (thereby driving another wedge between herself and those Western European leaders who have any tolerable supply of marbles left): for this, she gets signed up by the Chinese as one of the chieftains of the 'peace-loving peoples of the world'. A joke indeed, though it might not raise a laugh among the ashes of Phnom Penh.

ANYONE WHO had to wait until the invasion of Afghanistan to be disabused of notions about the essentially pacific nature of the Soviet state must have been a tardy learner indeed. But there remain a good many people who – though perfectly free of illusions about the nature of the Kremlin elite – still scan the news bulletins eagerly for signs that the superpowers have ceased for the moment to make faces at one another. It is difficult to accept, and made more difficult by the sackloads of nonsense talked while Nixon and Kissinger were in power, that not even the best and most benevolent accord which could be made between the Russians and the Americans is likely to be an event of any comparative significance. That is to say, no mutual adjustment they are capable of making in the *terms* of their confrontation amounts to very much beside the destructive potential inherent in the system of confrontation itself. International crises, like cigarettes, are always bad for you. But there was an old German Air Force joke which defined an optimist as a Starfighter pilot giving up smoking.

This does not mean that Afghanistan's suffering at the hands of various brands of 'peace-lover' is unimportant. Nor does it mean that the superpower relationships of rather small – if temporarily vainglorious – countries like Britain do not matter. What it means is that our real need is to begin the cautious movement of escaping from – indeed, thereby helping to dismantle – the superpower system.

'CAUTIOUS' is an appropriate word, because such a process will be filled with contingent difficulties and dangers. The feat of imagination required is to realise that the sum of all such contingent danger is less than the ultimate danger of continuation along the present path.

The first need is to escape from the mental attitudes of the superpower world. For instance, the cessation of US grain supplies to the USSR is reported as an evil consequence of the Afghan crisis – and this reverses the truth. In time of 'detente' America's grain surplus goes to rescue the Kremlin from the consequences of its own grossest failure – inability to organise a passably efficient agriculture in a land of natural abundance; a failure stemming directly from its own brutal, arbitrary politics. The example is one of many in which the superpowers exchange between themselves the roles of parasite and of host.

But political praxis, from a European viewpoint, also requires the capacity to distinguish between US and the USSR. Surely the same Americans who pose as 'peace-lovers' over Kabul are brutal aggressors over Phnom Penh. But American superpower megalomania is one element, however formidable, in a fluid political persona. Moscow's is an unshifting, decisive element in the make-up of the ruling elite.

PARANOIA induced by the Sino-American connection no doubt has something to do with the assault on Afghanistan. But something also is due to adventurism which likes to move a knife closer to the arteries of Western oil, and something, post-Iran, to a fear of nationalism on the borders of a Muslim empire. It is a dangerous cop-out, on the Left, merely to split the difference between the Kremlin and any possible America. Criticism of Carter need not forget that it has required courage for him to state the ambition than no American soldier shall die in battle under his command.

Perception of the difference between Russia and America leads to a vital premise of policy: which is that it is possible, given fortune and resolution, for nations to modify the terms of their alliance with America. Chile, naturally, is a warning example to the contrary: but it is still true that Frenchmen and Scandinavians have been able to modify, or renounce, their membership of NATO. Czechs and Romanians know that the Warsaw Pact is different.

Dismantling, therefore, can and must begin in the West. This does not advocate surrender to Moscow: because of the symbiotic nature of the superpower relationship, Soviet force could be made to decay in rough symmetry with the force of the other megalith on which it leans. It is a dangerous course, but still less dangerous than the one we are steering. (Thatcherite hysteria, naturally, sees things otherwise. But that emotional energy would be better spent on some modest, practical assistance for East European dissent, rather than in futile gestures aimed at Central Asia.)

Meanwhile, in a cause which may not be wholly admirable, but is at least their own, the Afghans are showing – as they have shown before – that they cannot easily be made into pawns for other people's chessboards. Not even the fact that their cause has been hijacked by the geopoliticians of Washington and Peking should disqualify them from the sympathy which, for the present at least, is all that we can offer them.

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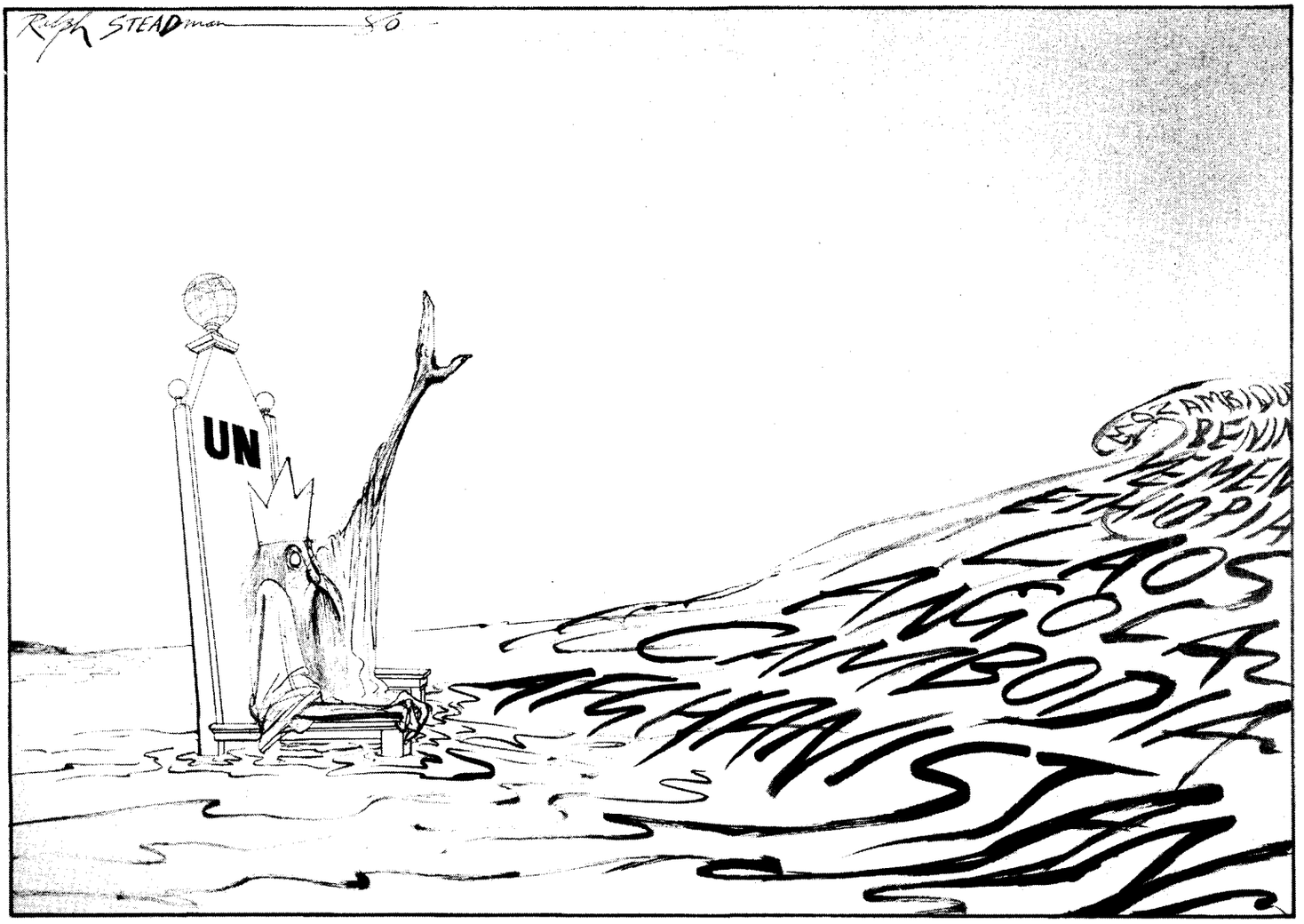

The scandal of the DPP

WHEN FIVE independent witnesses say that a man was brutally attacked only half an hour before he died with horrific injuries, all but the most bigoted would say the question of his assailants' guilt should be decided by a jury. So would the Director of Public Prosecutions – normally. The exception is when the attackers happen to be policemen. In the case of Jimmy Kelly, who died in the above circumstances (NS 20 July 1979), the DPP has said the available evidence does not justify court proceedings against any police officer. The DPP's office, it is now abundantly clear, holds that, to warrant charges, the evidence against a policeman must be considerably stronger than if he were a civilian. This unacceptable practice has evolved behind the DPP's closed doors, far removed from the arena where legal principles are usually formulated.

The justification offered by Peter Barnes, an Assistant DPP (speaking on a *TV Eye* programme), is that even on 'quite strong evidence' juries are reluctant to convict the police. But the possibility that a jury might err in favour of the police is no reason in itself for holding back from a prosecution. The public are entitled to know, in great detail, about alleged police misdemeanours and the courts are an ideal channel for this if the evidence would normally justify charges.

Expediency, however, seems to be gaining the upper hand in the DPP's office. Over Rhodesian sanctions busting we were introduced to the novel principle that if a crime is too expensive to investigate the perpetrators will get off scot free. And last year the NEW STATESMAN reported how Tony Burke – who is neither a policeman nor an oil company executive – *was* prosecuted. Burke was wrongly charged with murder after the DPP ignored the evidence of a string of eyewitnesses that he had tried to defend the victim.

The DPP's role, his accountability to Parliament and the extent to which the Dick Swivellers under him can redefine at will what constitutes 'sufficient evidence' are all matters, as we have said before, that need exhaustive scrutiny. It could begin next week with the Attorney-General explaining to Parliament the legal acrobatics behind the DPP's decision over Jimmy Kelly.

NOTES

The other island of Uncle Sam

Donald Kirk writes: The United States opened the new year by heralding a new era in military support of the 'Nationalist Chinese' regime with which it theoretically broke ties last March. No sooner had the one-year moratorium imposed on arms sales to Taiwan by President Carter expired at the end of December than the White House announced plans to sell $280 million worth of new material to the 'nationalist' military establishment. Carter had originally put off the arms sales as a sop to the communist government in Peking after belated recognition of its legitimacy and 'normalisation' of relations between Washington and Peking last March.

The imminent prospect of the US arms industry making a killing out of Taiwan epitomises the hypocrisy of the American position. Although the United States has shut down its embassy and withdrawn its military advisers, American diplomats without accreditation and 'retired' military officers function with impunity in the ramshackle set of buildings that once housed the US Military Assistance and Advisory Group there.

Deepening the irony is that the US has accepted many of the requests on Taiwan's 'shopping list', submitted to the White House several months ago, in the midst of the most flagrant violations of human rights in recent years. Last month soldiers and riot police fired tear gas into a crowd rallying in the southern industrial city of Kaohsiung in defence of the rights of native-born Taiwanese, who make up 85 per cent of the island's 17 million people. The crowd panicked and rushed the troops who had surrounded them. The following day the Taiwan authorities ordered the arrests of scores of leaders of the Taiwanese movement and closed down their magazine *Formosa*, the old Portuguese name for the island. This was the climax of a series of incidents in which authorities had dispatched hooligans to ransack *Formosa* offices, set up in major centres throughout the island for organising rallies and lectures as well as distributing the magazine, whose monthly circulation had risen to 100,000 by the time it was banned.

In the fastness of their one-time military compound, euphemistically known as the American Institute in Taiwan, US non-diplomats are reluctant to discuss their country's continued support of the 'nationalist' regime that fled from the mainland in 1949. However, sources admitted that American arms sales to Taiwan were likely to pick up at their same old level of several hundred million dollars a year. One source in the American compound acknowledged that this would make Taiwan 'one of the larger purchasers from the US'.

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Taiwan's overriding interest is in long-range, all-weather aircraft – the sort that could go on missions to the mainland, just 90 miles away at the closest point. The US has turned down Taiwan's request for the F16, pronouncing it too 'offensive' for the definition of 'defensive' weapons that it has promised to keep on shipping under the terms of the Taiwan Relations Act, signed by Carter last April to legitimise US support for the regime.

Instead, Taiwan and US officials are mulling over a brand new plane, still in the prototype stage, called the F5G — an advanced version of the F5 that Taiwan now produces on a licensing arrangement with Northrop. The first batch of military hardware authorised by the White House includes a number of items high on the shopping list, ranging from anti-aircraft missiles to highly sophisticated weapons systems for destroyers and patrol boats, to an electronic device for shielding aircraft from 'friendly' anti-aircraft fire.

'We're probably going to be a bit slow,' said a US official, but he quickly made clear that the suppression of the Taiwanese campaign against the mainlanders who rule them was hardly a consideration. Rather, he said, the White House 'wants to keep the other side going' — that is, relations with Peking. Secretary of Defence Harold Brown this month joined the parade of American leaders who have gone to Peking. 'It's important that he be given a strategic understanding in view of the confrontation with the Soviet Union,' said an American source, steadfastly denying any possibility that the US might some day supply military material to Peking as well as Taiwan.

America's residual loyalty to this island enclave may rest on straightforward capitalist considerations. Amid all the talk about 'opening the China market', two-way trade between the US and Taiwan rose to some ten billion dollars last year, a third higher than the year before and several times America's trade with the mainland. The 'American Institute' operates full-scale commercial and travel services (the latter a consular office in an ordinary embassy) together with the mysterious 'Technical Services Section', which is responsible for expediting the arms shipments. A local man from the US Chamber of Commerce put it succinctly: 'I feel Taiwan is the best place in the world to be an American.'

Keeping Ulster out of Thatcher's pigeon-hole

Mary Holland writes: No one, not even the politicians involved, is predicting any great success for the constitutional talks between three of Northern Ireland's parties, which started in Belfast under the chairmanship of Mr Humphrey Atkins on Monday: that is sensible. For anyone who has picked their way through the debris of assemblies, executives, and constitutional conventions which have littered Ulster's political landscape in recent years, any expression of optimism would be crazy. The opening session procedure, scheduled to finish at 5 pm had to be extended until eight o'clock while the Secretary of State shuttled between the Rev Ian Paisley and Mr John Hume trying to find a formula for both politicians to present their opening papers which would preserve sufficient face all round to keep the show on the road.

And yet, even on the first day there were signs, at the not unimportant symbolic level, that something had shifted in Northern Ireland's politics. Outside the conference chamber the once invincible Official Unionist Party, which had held unchallenged and unchallengeable power in Ulster for fifty years, mounted a picket to demonstrate their boycott of the talks while the Catholic leader, John Hume, and the man almost equally reviled by many Unionists, the Rev Ian Paisley, led their delegations into the conference. Dr Paisley, in an unusually reflective mood, revealed what finally prompted him into the talks when he said on Irish Radio that it was time to recognise that the British government had the final veto on all discussions and that if either he or John Hume walked out of the talks 'Mrs Thatcher is going to put a solution on us whether we like it or not... somewhere in a pigeon hole among the Bureaucrats in Whitehall is Mrs Thatchers plan.' He intimated that that plan in the harsh climate of economic cutbacks was unlikely to be agreeable.

The fact that Hume and Paisley, particularly the latter, have decided to take part in the talks and seem reasonably determined to stay at them is important. Each man, with a huge personal vote in the European Election behind him, can now claim to represent the authentic mood of his own community. It is also useful that both have the opportunity to meet in the slightly less glasshouse atmosphere of European Parliament. If the talks continue without any major upset, and that is still a big if, Mr Atkins hopes to report to the Cabinet by Easter. John Hume has called the talks 'the beginning of a process' and that is already optimistic. The most to be hoped for is that the process makes few headlines, and that way some progress may be achieved.

Green threat to Schmidt

Werner Kastor writes: This weekend's meeting of Germany's 'Green Groups' to found a national party with the aim of participating in October's general election will be watched nervously by the senior partner in Germany's present socialist/liberal coalition – the Social Democratic Party. If the Green Party gains strength, the SPD fears it will lose its junior partner during the next elections.

The Green Groups had some dazzling successes in local and state elections last year and they have a very real chance of passing the five per cent hurdle which German law has put up against small parties before they can qualify for seats in the Bonn Parliament. Alternatively, a Green Party success may prevent the Free Democrats (FDP) – as the Liberals are called in West Germany – from getting past the same hurdle. Either outcome is undesirable for the SPD. If the FDP and the Greens do not get into parliament, the CDU/CSU will almost certainly be able to put their man, Franz Josef Strauss, into the Chancellory. A Green Party in the Bundestag could force the socialists to drop their programme of a moderate expansion of nuclear power stations. This would be a good enough reason for Chancellor Schmidt, as he declared at his party's Congress last December, to resign.

The Greens see it differently. They believe they can get into parliament, keep Strauss out of office and influence the present government's energy policy – 40 per cent of the SPD voted against its nuclear policy at the last party Congress. Judging by last year's performance the Greens – who have also gathered support because of disenchantment with established political parties, especially among the young – have every reason to be optimistic.

In March they narrowly missed the five per cent threshold during the Berlin state elections, but gained ten seats in the City's district parliament. In October they broke through the five per cent barrier in the Bremen state elections and were rewarded with four seats in parliament. In Baden-Wuerttemberg, contesting only five districts, they got 18 per cent of the vote and 13 parliamentary seats. The FDP got less than five per cent of the vote. This year there are four state elections before the general election in October; the most important, in May, are the state parliament elections in Northrhine Westfalia – the biggest West German state.

At the moment the Greens do not have a programme. A meeting in November agreed two major principles – 'a major dynamic and balanced economic order' and the promotion of 'rank and file democracy' – and set up 14 working groups to report to this weekend's conference. Economics will be by far the most important part of the party's programme but at the moment the most controversial issue is relations with the communists.

By a narrow majority November's meeting decided that no communist party members should be allowed to join the Greens, though a third of the delegates did not take part in the vote with Rudolf Bahro, the East German dissident, saying 'All dogmatic ballast which might hamper the unity of the movement has to be thrown overboard.'

The secret of the Greens' success so far has been their ability to sweep differences of opinion under the carpet but it seems unlikely that a political party can encompass the ideological spread from authoritarian marxist to right wing farmer which exists in the Greens at the moment. Already in some states the Green Party is splitting over the CP membership issue; in Northrhine Westfalia there are now two organisations. But if this issue can be resolved, a strong Green Party could force radical changes on the SPD.

New top man at TUC

Patrick Wintour writes: The recent death of Alan Hargreaves, head of the TUC's International Department, has opened up one of the most important posts in British trade unionism (the Department administers a third of the TUC's budget) and revives the question of the intimate relationship between the TUC and the Foreign Office.

Hargreave's background had been the subject of increasing criticism. A prize fellow at Magdalen College, Oxford, he joined the Foreign Office in 1950 and, by the time he left six years later, was deputy head of the economic intelligence department. In that post he had played an important part in developing Britain's attitude to the Marshall Plan and the whole of the Western response to the Eastern bloc. In this he had the co-operation of the Labour Party International Secretary, Denis Healey.

Despite no background in trade union work, Hargreaves joined the TUC as an assistant in the economic department. Within four years he was appointed to run the International Department, which he did in a manner apparently aimed at minimising any real involvement by the labour movement in international affairs. His relationships were always stronger with the Foreign Office than with the Labour Party.

Now the post is being advertised internally and Michael Walsh, who has served two years' secondment to the FO, is widely expected to replace him. Although a more co-operative figure than Hargreaves, Walsh may not make the clean break from the past the TUC needs. A new committee to campaign for a more accountable and active International Department holds its inaugural conference in London's Conway Hall on Sunday, 10 February at 2 pm.

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THE LABOUR PARTY
Paul Whiteley and Ian Gordon

Who are the activists and what do they believe in?

Middle class, Militant and male

WHAT IS THE nature and health of the much-cited grassroots of the Labour Party? A survey carried out at the 1978 party conference provides some answers. It shows a party with sharply differing levels of membership and activism but with an overwhelmingly male and middle-class make-up. Tony Benn emerges as by far the most popular candidate for the new leader while – most startling of all – the far-left Militant tendency is the single largest faction among conference delegates, outstripping even the Tribunites.[1]

More than 50 per cent of constituency parties had less than 500 members (the smallest membership reported was 16!) while 13 per cent reported more than 1,000 members, the minimum number for affiliation. The median number of members reported was 400, with around 65 per cent of the parties reporting less than 100 activists among those members. The median number of activists was 90, so on average around 23 per cent of the membership were active, although again there were wide variations across constituencies. In all there must be about 55,000 activists. The ratio of activists to members varies a lot up and down the country: 17 per cent of those parties reporting less than 50 activists, reported less than 100 members, whereas 28 per cent of this group reported more than 500 members.

What is the relationship between membership and the Labour vote? The Labour percentage of the total vote in the October General Election of 1974 was compared with the various membership variables. The highest correlation was between the percentage Labour vote and the number of male activists (+0.40). However, we cannot of course conclude from this that the 'lads' turn out the vote, since it may be the vote which turns out the 'lads'. But it seems there is a moderately strong relationship between the number of activists and the number of voters. Interestingly enough the correlation between the Labour vote and the total membership was weaker (+0.29). In electoral terms activists count more than members. There was also a moderate correlation between the percentage of ward parties in a constituency which were active (+0.39).

In view of this it is disturbing from Labour's point of view that just under half the respondents said that all their ward parties were active, and around a quarter reported that only up to half their wards had active parties. There are clearly wide areas of the country which do not have active local Labour parties. The local Labour activists take a lot of stick from the media, and many pundits dismiss them as an irrelevancy. But at a time when party loyalties are weakening anyway, their role in bolstering Labour's election performance has probably been underrated.

Delegates were also asked how the membership of their local parties had developed over the last five years. Some 49 per cent said that it had either increased or increased greatly. Nineteen per cent said that membership had decreased. Conventional wisdom argues that the party loses members in government and gains them in opposition. But this may not be the case, even given that some delegates may be over-optimistic about their membership growth. This is because one might assume that membership relates to the general popularity of Labour in the country. When popularity increases then membership increases and vice versa. The average support for Labour in the Gallup polls over the period 1974-78 was 41.2 per cent, in contrast with the 28 per cent they received at the nadir of Labour popularity in May 1968. Thus if membership follows popularity, then it is likely to have improved over the last five years compared with the doldrums of the late sixties and early seventies, even though Labour has been in government during these years.

What then are the social characteristics of Labour party conference delegates? Approximately 70 per cent of them were in white collar occupations, and the rest were blue collar. The largest blue collar category was the skilled workers who made up 27 per cent of the total sample. Some 57 per cent of the sample were unambiguously middle-class, measured in occupational terms (i.e. Registrar General's Class 1 and 2 categories) with a large group of teachers and professional people. This tends to support the view that the grassroots Labour party is predominantly run by middle-class radicals. Of course it is possible that delegates are unrepresentative of members as a whole, and this could well be true but they are occupying a prestigious position and as such are very likely to be opinion leaders among the activists and therefore socially similar to them.

Altogether 86 per cent of the sample were male which indicates that women still have a long way to go to be represented in proportion to their numbers in the party at the annual conference. Though respondents were predominantly middle-class in occupational terms, only 22 per cent of them thought of themselves as middle class, with no less than 72 per cent claiming to be working class. Middle-class Labour activists tend to have a different perspective on the class system than the middle class as a whole. They are less likely to be burdened with the illusion that there are no classes, or that professional people are 'above' such things, the dominant view which prevails in the middle class. Middle-class radicals also tend to over-identify themselves with the working class.

No less than 60 per cent of respondents were employed in the public sector. So whether they are middle-class or not, they have an instrumental reason for preferring Labour, apart from any idealism, since, compared with the Conservatives, Labour is the defender of the public sector. In this sense the rise of middle-class Labour activism probably parallels the rise of middle-class Labour vot-

The State of the Labour Party

Number of Members	% of Constituency Parties
under 100	7
100-499	47
500-999	33
1000 plus	13

Number of Activists	% of Constituency Parties
under 25	7
26-50	27
50-100	31
100 plus	35

% of Active Ward Parties	% of Constituency Parties
all	49
three-quarters	26
half	17
quarter	7
none	1

Preference for New Leader	% of Delegates
Michael Foot	7
Tony Benn	48
Dennis Healey	15
Peter Shore	2
John Silkin	4
Shirley Williams	11
Merlyn Rees	2
Roy Hattersley	2
Others	9

Faction Delegate Associated With	% of Delegates
Left of Tribune/Militant	36
Tribune/Left of Centre	24
Democratic Socialist/ 'pro party'	12
Middle ground/moderates	26
Right of Centre/ Right Wing	2

[1] *The survey was carried out in Britain by Paul Whiteley of the University of Bristol, and Ian Gordon of Kingston Polytechnic. It is a random survey of delegates with 250 respondents. It is part of a European-wide survey of delegates to conferences of parties that contested the European elections.*

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ing, an important development in contemporary-British politics.[2]

What of the political attitudes and beliefs of delegates? It is interesting to focus here on two questions; their preferences for a new party leader, and the extent to which they categorise themselves into factions. This information is summarised in the table. The most surprising thing about the preferences for a new leader is not perhaps the enormous support for Tony Benn, but the relatively meagre support for Michael Foot. For many years Michael Foot has been regarded as the doyen of conference speakers, his fiery rhetoric winning many a debate for the platform. But he is clearly completely out of the running now as far as delegates are concerned. Of course this may be due to his age, although he is not a great deal older than Denis Healey. There must be a suspicion that this lack of support has something to do with his close identification with the Callaghan government's policies. Hopefuls such as John Silkin and Roy Hattersley have much ground to make up, and David Owen received only one vote. Denis Healey can take comfort from the fact that he is second in the popularity stakes, even though he is a long way behind Tony Benn. Presumably if he were elected as leader by the parliamentary party he would pick up the support of people who prefer Shirley Williams, and several others on the list, but there is no doubt who would be the next leader if it were up to the party conference delegates to decide.

Finally, delegates were asked to identigy any factions which they thought existed in the party, and to indicate which they belonged to. Some answers did not fit into any Left-Right dimension – one delegate claimed to be in the 'pro-old age pension' faction. But most answers could be coded into groups. It is clear from this table that the far Left, particularly the Militant tendency, are stronger than anyone thought, and indeed stronger than the Tribunites. The Democratic Socialist category is rather more vague than the others, but the middle ground/moderate category is probably fairly homogenous and together with the 'right of centre' group represents the social democratic wing of the party. Social Democrats are alive and well in the grassroots party. As a rough summary, the ideological balance between the Left and Right in the Parliamentary party is more or less reversed in the grassroots party: in Parliament the Right and the right-of-centre are dominant, in the country it is the other way round. In view of this the old maxim that the Labour Party is best led from the left-of-centre looks to be very true.

[2] *For a discussion of the survey evidence on the rise of the middle-class Labour vote see I. Crewe, N. Sarlvik, and J. All, 'Partisan dealignment in Britain 1964-74',* British Journal of Political Science 7 (1977) *pp. 129-190.*

RUSSIA

The good soldier Kazis

Analyses of the West-East balance usually present the Soviet armed forces as a monolithic unity. But, as REUBEN AINSZTEIN shows, calculations should include the internal evidence which suggests that there are powerful, long-term tendencies towards disunity.

THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES (the 1946 name) are vastly more powerful than the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, Red Air Force and Red Navy ever were. There is no doubt that the average Soviet soldier and officer is today better educated and trained than was the case in the Red Army in 1941-5. But would these men and women, if Armageddon were to come, prove as ready as their grandparents – who, in 1941-2, withstood the greatest losses any army has encountered, and went on for another three years to end the war in Berlin?

The official argument is that they are stronger than the Red Army ever was in peacetime. It runs as follows: from 1917 to Khruschev's ascendancy, the Soviet state was a dictatorship of the proletariat, in which entire social classes and national groups were enemies or potential enemies, and were banned from the Army.

The Soviet leadership introduced universal military service as late as 1 September 1939, the day of Hitler's invasion of Poland. Even then, hundreds of thousands were excluded from call-up because their parents were 'enemies of the people', or because they were needed to keep the concentration-camp system going. But the extension of universal military service to the Moslem peoples of Central Asia proved successful. Divisions formed in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenia played an outstanding part in the defence of Moscow and at Stalingrad. Thus in the war against Germany the Red Army became, as it were, the first national army in Russia's history.

Now, says the Ministry of Defence, 'Great changes have occurred in the Soviet political system. Our socialist state, which emerged as a dictatorship of the proletariat, has become an all-embracing national state expressing the interests and the will of the entire nation. A new historical community of people has been created in the shape of the Soviet nation. As a result of this, the Soviet Armed Forces have become the weapon of our all-embracing state, a reliable defender of all the classes and strata of Soviet society. Their social and class basis has been widened. The unity between the armed forces and the nation has been cemented even further.'*

Leonid Brezhnev constantly claims that a new type of Soviet patriotism has resulted from the creation of a new type of Soviet nation. But the claim is not supported by what we know about the untrammelled growth of Great Russian nationalism and chauvinism and the nationalist reactions evoked among the non-Russian members of the Soviet State. The sons and daughters of over 100 peoples and national groups serve today in the Armed Forces, and they do not leave their national characteristics at home.

IN THE RED ARMY political officers dealt with nationalism by opposing it with Marxist-Leninist internationalism, and by quoting Lenin on Great Russian imperialism. In the Soviet Armed Forces, where 'anti-Zionism' and the cult of everything Russian have replaced the ideals of proletarian internationalism, such resources are not available.

The difficulties of political officers are not much discussed in the Soviet press, but a recent article in *Red Star,* the Ministry of Defence daily paper, gave (perhaps by censor's slip) a revealing insight. It concerned Colonel Vladimir Ivonin, a political officer in a unit of the élite Airborne Corps. He addressed the unit, whose recruits speak nine languages, about their being 'one united family'. He also informed them that life for Soviet soldiers was improving all the time, and that their rations had recently been greatly improved. He then asked for questions.

A Lithuanian recruit named Kazis Zdancjavicius, enlisted only one month, then asked whether it was true that in the Airborne Corps the officers were issued with a superior type of parachute to that of the men? He also wanted the Colonel to explain why, if the rations had so much improved, so many of his comrades were getting food parcels and money-orders from their parents?

Red Star's author, himself a colonel, went on to say that 'his other questions were equally pointed and aggressive', though we are not told what they were.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, the colonel dealt successfully with Kazis' questions, and after a few months the spiky Lithuanian became an excellent soldier and Soviet patriot. Nor is there any doubt that while half the men in such units are Russians, they will be reliable. But how much longer will Russians be more than 50 per cent of the Soviet Forces?

The national census of January 1979 found the Soviet population to be 140 million females and 122.4 million males – the male population having been depleted by some 24 million during the German war. The women who did not find husbands after 1945 were mostly Slavs and Jews, because it was the Jews, Belorussians, Ukrainians and Russians who suffered worst from Nazi genocide. The result is that the population of the USSR is 50-60 million lower than it would have been but for the fearsome imbalance between men and women in the generation born between 1915-1925.

Imbalance is made more considerable by the fact that there is a rapidly falling birth-rate among the European peoples of the USSR, together with something of a demographic explosion among the Moslem peoples, where the annual birth-rate is more than 30 per 1,000. American specialists have calculated that by the year 2,000 some 35 per cent of recruits to the Soviet Armed Forces will come from the Turkic peoples of Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

Their peasant background may not be the ideal one for recruits to a high-technology army: quite certainly, they will not take kindly to the imperialistic claims of the Great Russians, who will by then be less than half of the Soviet Union's 'national army'.

Soviet power is not going to melt away. But, as the young Lithuanian's voice is joined by those of other questioners, it may become something rather less monolithically daunting than orthodox Western thinking estimates it to be.

(*)*Sovetskiaye Vooruzhennye Sily,* Institute of Military History of the Soviet Ministry of Defence, Moscow 1978, p.409.

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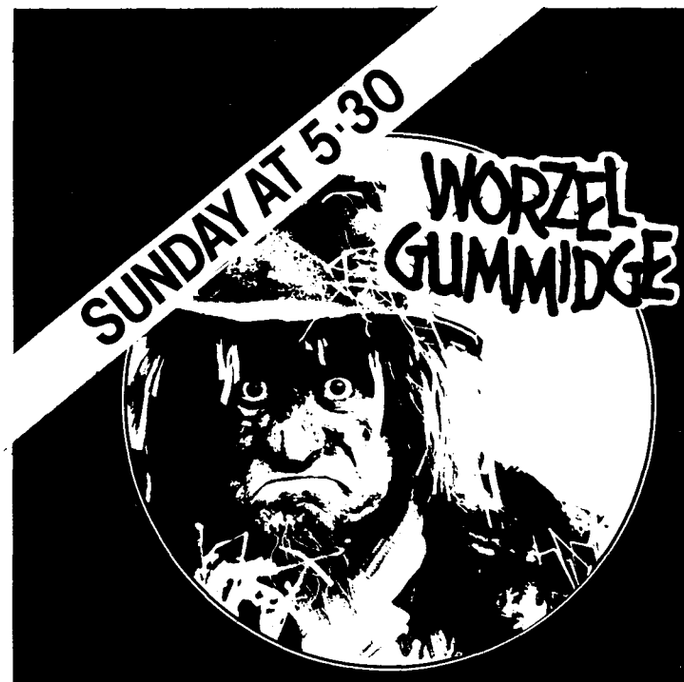

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Delhi Notebook

Christopher Hitchens

☐ Number 12, Willingdon Crescent is a spacious mansion in the Delhi suburbs, where Mrs Gandhi has been living out the last two years of political exile. Over the past few days, it has taken on the appearance of a court. Crowds of sycophants and retainers stand on the lawn, with supporters strategically placed to applaud whenever she deigns to appear on the verandah and show herself to the throng. A holy khan of some indeterminate sort has established himself in a tent. Muscular stewards are there to drive off beggars who approach the presence too closely. As the results pour in, the atmosphere of self-congratulation becomes palpable. I retreat to the other side of town, to the offices of a small political journal. The editor and his staff are sitting in a state of shock. Not only have their predictions been confounded but, as the editor says, 'Last time she was in power she tried to close us down completely. I wonder how long it will be before Sanjay's boys pay us another call. And what can we say when a dictator comes to power by democratic means?'

☐ The Indian judicial system is in for an interesting time. Almost all the leadership of the newly triumphant Congress Party are facing charges of one kind or another. Mrs Gandhi herself, her charming son, Mr Bansi Lal: all of them are in a state of *sub judice*. One of the most colourful cases against Mrs Gandhi herself is a suit for the payment of several thousand pounds which she owes to the Indian Air Force. During the last election she used her prime ministerial position to get air force planes seconded to her campaign. She still owes them for the aviation fuel. Many of the judges have been postponing hearings in what looked suspiciously like a 'wait and see' manoeuvre. Now that the defendants have become the political masters the idea of executive privilege may be revived in some fascinating forms.

☐ 'There are already clearly marked fascist tendencies in India's young men and women ...and the Congress is beginning to reflect them. The corporate state, with private property preserved and vested interests curbed but not done away with, will probably appeal to them.' That was Nehru writing in 1936. If he could see his daughter's party in action he might have cause to update his prophecy. As Mrs Gandhi put it recently during a speech in Bombay, it is sometimes necessary to restrict democracy in order to preserve it. Among her new parliamentary group there are over a hundred personal nominees of Sanjay Gandhi's – local bosses and businessmen with no political or democratic background, picked to adorn a ticket which had only one name and one face on its posters. These people have a few personal scores to settle and more than a few vested interests to uphold. Ideology of any kind is foreign to them. They are real corporate state timber. Perhaps I have been talking to the wrong people, but all my friends are divided between feelings of fear and feelings of disgust.

☐ They say that hypocrisy is an English vice, and perhaps that is how the Indians learnt it. The use of the term *Harijan* to describe the untouchables is a prime example. Harijan means 'children of God' – which possibly makes people feel a little better about the way untouchables are treated by their fellow human beings. This election has seen several disgusting cases of Harijans being shot, beaten and forcibly prevented from voting by higher caste groups. The countryside is increasingly dominated by a sort of Kulak class, based on the 'Green Revolution' and the boom in 'miracle rice'. The hatred of this class for the landless labourers is intense, and one of the outgoing Janata government's worst sins was its pandering to that prejudice. The only part of the country where any progress has been made in lifting the misery of the rural poor is West Bengal – which held out alone against the electoral tide by returning the Left Front on a very high poll.

☐ It's easy to be too optimistic about the Left Front, which is dominated by the Communist Party (Marxist). But a visit to Calcutta can be unexpectedly heartening all the same. In West Bengal the sectarian religious element is kept out of politics, and the national ban on cow slaughter is resisted. Unemployment benefit has been introduced in the cities, and a 'food for work' programme begun in the rural areas. Considering the sheer magnitude of the problems, and the deadly hostility of the central government to a maverick socialist regional administration, one is compelled to applaud, even when the Left Front offices do display a prominent and flattering portrait of Stalin.

☐ A few yards away from these offices is the headquarters of the Missionaries of Charity. Here Mother Theresa has her base. I went for a stroll with her through the clotted streets, and was impressed by the number of people who came up to touch her feet (an embarrassing form of salute which she does nothing to discourage and handles rather well). She took me to her orphanage – a splendid institution which converts heartbreak into something quite like happiness. 'You see,' she said, 'here we are fighting abortion with adoption'. Yes, well, up to a point. The local comrades are very careful to praise Mother Theresa, which is a compliment of a sort to her popularity. But I can't repress the feeling that a campaigner against birth control and abortion is among the last things Calcutta needs.

☐ The reaction to Afghanistan's annexation has been rather complex here. Viewed from an Indian standpoint, the most disturbing thing is the likelihood that the United States will help to rearm and stabilise the hangman's regime of General Zia in Pakistan. With the prospect of a Pakistani 'Islamic bomb' also on the horizon, India may be drawn into another regional arms race. Memories are quite long here, and people recall the last American defence pact with Pakistan in 1959. Those arms, which ended up being used against India, were ostensibly supplied for the purpose of warding off the Chinese – now, of course, Washington's staunchest chums. What further wonderful ironies will the game of nations provide?

FREE SPEECH

Spiteful Whitelaw

WILLIAM WHITELAW, Home Secretary, has come up trumps with a policy to excite his admirers. In keeping with his policy of introducing tougher measures throughout the penal system he has ordered an immediate withdrawal of those small privileges enjoyed by long-term prisoners. The inmates of Parkhurst, Gartree and other dispersal establishments will not be allowed to receive toilet-parcels from their families or friends. Those lucky enough to have some private cash may, however, purchase items from the canteen, provided they spend only £1.50 per calender month; other inmates will have to pay for their toilet requisites out of their meagre earnings. They can, of course, use the soap and shaving-sticks supplied by the prison, but few do: personal vanity is not confined to the world beyond the walls.

The amount of money an inmate can spend on hobby items is also to be severely curtailed. No more than £60 in one year. And fish tanks have gone: strict orders were issued that even the tiniest aquarium was to be disposed of by the beginning of this month. Their inhabitants have been deposited in a larger tank, located, and generally ignored, in the visitors' room, or flushed down the lavatory.

Short of reintroducing the tread mill and oakum-picking it is hard to imagine a more retrograde and pointless edict. For many prisoners a small aquarium means more than a source of enjoyment; shut away from the sights and sounds and the ordinary stimuli of normal intercourse this innocent receptable represents the only link with things familiar and loved. It gives the prisoner an opportunity to cherish something intensely personal, something unassociated with the cruel realities of his surroundings.

Surprising though it may seem to those outside the prison walls, a silly little tank of Mollies or a couple of sluggish Guramis can come to mean a great deal to even the hardest criminal. Your otherwise brutish and callous long-termer will sooner go without his tobacco than see his beloved fish deprived of food and other essentials. He will regale you for hours with endless stories about the characteristics and peculiarities of this or that particular specimen. Decisions such as Whitelaw's are the stuff of which prison riots are made.

Very few prison governers – who are allowed a certain amount of personal discretion in administering their establishments – would dare defy a direct order from the Director of Prisons who is, himself, answerable to the Home Secretary. No doubt some prison governors will feel the Home Secretary's orders are both timely and purposeful but some think otherwise and some prison officers are unhappy about enforcing the new regulations as it is they who will bear the brunt of the long-term prisoners' resentment – already evident at Gartree and Wormwood Scrubs.

The author was recently released on parole from Parkhurst, having served half of a long-term prison sentence.

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DEFENCE
Duncan Campbell

Britain's new air defence programme starts

Will it be any better than the last?

ONE OF THE GREATEST boobs in technological decision-making of the post-war era was the British government's commitment to a new radar network for the 1960s, designed to alert us to any attack and called LINESMAN. One of the features of this system was that radar stations along the East Coast fed their information to the air control centre at West Drayton, just north of Heathrow airport. At one stage the communications connections were made via the rather conspicuous Post Office Tower in central London. Later, cables were used instead, but as these ran below a manhole cover just outside the Soviet Consulate, British defence against nuclear attack remained less than complete and vulnerable to a single axe-wielding saboteur.

The third major plan for Britain's air defence since the end of the Second World War is now on the drawing board and will be costing around £300 million. The LINESMAN computer centre at West Drayton, which did not turn out to be such a threat to our security as it never worked, cost over £120 million and was an unmitigated disaster, relying as it did on technological standards of 1959 rather than 1969 and a mode of construction which most closely resembled telephone exchanges of several decades earlier. Will the new system be any better?

Officially, of course, the answer is yes. The RAF, as always, would like more fighters and radar stations. They expect, in accordance with NATO's doctrine, that a Soviet attack on Britain (the only threat considered) would, initially at least, be non-nuclear. With this in mind they are already going through a spasm of 'hardening' airfields and other installations to resist the same sort of bomber attack as was experienced in the last war. But a sounding of official policy in this field reveals that the supra-national military requirements of NATO have now supplanted any national defence policy.

The threat to Britain arises from the plethora of American military installations to which we play host, and not at all from our own capabilities. As a result military planners construct ever more elaborate plans for the ground defence of airfields from fabled 'saboteurs' and 'British partisans'. To NATO and Ministry of Defence planners Britain's main role is as an 'aircraft carrier' on which the US flag flies; our air defences do 'a very important bit in protecting American interest'. Civilian 'centres of population' take second place.

In line with this policy, much of the new radar network will be paid for by NATO funds and, as a result, the tendering for the four contracts up for grabs this year will not be restricted to the usual cosy local circle of Plessey and GEC-Marconi. Collectively the new network will be known as Improved UKADGE (United Kingdom Air Defence Ground Environment). Two multinationals are now bidding for the major contract; bidding for two new radar stations in Scotland closed last month and two other contracts will cover another ten radar stations. All the stations will be mobile, an innovation that will, it is hoped, considerably reduce their vulnerability to attack.

This new feature only points up the inutility of the present system, which has to meet a presumed threat very similar to that for which Improved UKADGE is designed and which relies on large well-known radar stations, not on wheels and not protected by the new 'decoy' radar transmitters designed to draw the fire of lethal so-called 'anti-radiation missiles' (ARM), which use the radar itself to steer direct to its target. In other words, if the new system is what we need, we have been badly protected for years. Indeed, such a feature has characterised Britain's radar network since the days of ROTOR – the first post-war modernisation–which relied on a string of deep underground bunkers (soon rendered obsolete) along the south coast, even though a Soviet attack from Normandy was as unlikely then as it is now.

Just as ROTOR was completed, in the late fifties, air defence policy took its greatest and most infamous lurch into idiocy. The 1957 Defence White Paper unwisely proclaimed the end of the manned aircraft era and the introduction of missiles against which no defence was practicable. This was part of NATO's 'tripwire' doctrine – any attack would be nuclear and all we needed was a radar system that gave adequate warning. So, in 1958, ATE Ltd (now part of Plessey) was commissioned to plan a new radar network for the sixties. The result was LINESMAN and our present radar and communications network is still largely that designed for LINESMAN. As this was not sufficient to detect intruders, let alone resist an attack, the approaches from north-west Scotland were bolstered by the addition of a new station in the Outer Hebrides and the modernisation of two other stations in the Shetland Islands and on the Faroes.

But the existing stations remain vulnerable in a number of critical ways, not all of them considered in current defence orthodoxy. For example, large nuclear weapons can be used to generate enormously destructive electrical surges, which destroy communications and electrical systems – including radar – without any immediate damage to people or property. NATO chose to think that such an attack would not be used with an otherwise conventional attack, rendering air and other defence inoperative. The present network has also virtually no capacity to detect low level attacks and is vulnerable to ARM homing missiles and jamming.

The new Improved UKADGE will rely on keeping major radars mobile; although in peacetime they will be based at the existing and other fixed sites, they can be moved away in times of crisis. They will be linked together by a new nationwide communications network now being planned by the Army which, for the first time, will be completely independent of ordinary civil communications. The system, called BOXER, is primarily intended for army use, but air defence will be its next most important job.

BOXER is a further product of NATO and military determination not to rely on civil resources; military officials don't want to be 'totally dependent on Post Office workers being totally loyal'. They and their NATO superiors fear that a war effort might be disrupted by 'unions clamouring at the gates because they don't want to go to war'. BOXER radio stations will be operated by the Army, which will also be entirely responsible for their defence.

In the spirit of competition Marconi and Plessey have joined with the US Hughes and the French Thomson CSF companies to bid for the big £100 million or so contract for the command and control centres and their communications. Until a late stage it appeared that there would be no competitors, a familiar enough situation for those who had observed Marconi and Plessey comfortably sewing up the market in the past, and living off the proceeds of reselling the expertise acquired to South Africa and the Middle East. However, another consortium of Dutch, US, French and British companies have appeared on the scene. The British company is ICL, who have very little experience of this type of computer application – a situation not dissimilar to Plessey who designed the LINESMAN system 20 years ago.

When the details of who gets what are settled later this year, the result will no doubt, in time-honoured tradition, show that a bit has gone to each lobby. As the history of British air defence since the war has shown, the policy has often been better at protecting the vested interests of the military-industrial lobby than the populace of the United Kingdom.

A menace to pupils?

Francis Wheen writes: A student at Leeds University who needs a medical certificate before he can be accepted on a postgraduate course claims that, because of his homosexuality, he has been told that he cannot have a certificate until he sees a psychiatrist.

The student, Geoffrey Brighton, has been provisionally accepted for a Certificate of Education course at Leeds, where he is now in his final year as an undergraduate; final acceptance for the course depended on his passing his finals and a medical examination. So on 6 December last year he saw a Dr Ryan at University Student Health (USH) who found his condition satisfactory. Later he was recalled by Dr Ryan, who said that he had discovered from the files that Mr Brighton was a homosexual; Ryan had consulted Dr I. C. Fraser, head of USH. 'Both agreed,' says Brighton, 'that they did not have the knowledge by which my "emotional stability" could be judged, and that consequently I would have to see a psychiatrist for a second opinion before they would give me a medical certificate.' He refused, and that is how the position stands.

Approached by the NS this week, Dr Fraser said that when assessing someone like Mr Brighton for a medical certificate, 'it's a question of trying to assess a person from a medical and a teaching point of view. Is he a menace to the pupils? This is obviously a consideration, just as it would be if he drank like a fish. We also ask: have they got vulnerable points in themselves which pupils might seize on?'

Dr Fraser's wide interpretation of his duty does not accord with the view of the department which actually requires the certificate. 'The doctor has to state whether the person's medically fit for teaching,' I was told by the Graduate Certificate Office at Leeds. Do you expect the doctors to look into non-medical considerations as well? 'Oh no, we've never done that. It's simply a medical report.'

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Feeding the future

As the snack replaces the meal, HANNAH WRIGHT looks at the quality, costing and organisation of school food.

THE DOCTORS: In a recent letter to *The Lancet* Dr R. J. Rona of St Thomas's Hospital said that in a survey of 10,000 children those receiving free school meals were nearly one inch shorter than those who paid for their dinners or brought sandwiches. He concludes that free dinners are going to the right children, the ones who are nutritionally deprived and less well-grown. In a previous survey Dr Rona discovered that large families, unemployment and poverty (socio-economic class 5) contributed to lower 'attained height'. But other research is proving that nutritional standards for school meals are not high enough. Dr R. W. D. Turner, an authority on fats, said in *The Practitioner* that school meals should be altered to minimise the amount of animal and saturated fat consumed: 'The present excessive use of whole milk and other animal fats is laying the foundation for future arteriosclerosis. Post mortems on children killed accidentally show that most already have signs of arterial damage caused by over consumption of saturated fat'.

A. E. Bender, Professor of Nutrition at London University, has done school meals surveys in the London Borough of Brent and in Essex. He found that only a half or at most three-quarters of the protein and calories stipulated in the regulations were actually being served to the children. Dr Geoffrey Taylor has done surveys on Somerset school meals, which he found to be almost entirely lacking in the B group of vitamins, vitamin C and fibre, besides containing far too much saturated fat, sugar and white flour:

> When you consider that appendicitis, hiatus hernia, diverticulitis, gallstones, peptic ulcers, varicose veins, heart attacks and strokes are all in part caused by faulty diet, the low nutritional quality of school meals is indefensible.

He went on to blame the medical establishment for its apathy and said that school and community doctors should be fighting for improvements. Part-time County Medical Officer Joyce Grice occasionally eats a school dinner between checking 150 school leavers and attending a child welfare clinic. She wasn't aware of any of this research (nor was any teacher, organiser or cook) and therefore thought school meals were nutritionally adequate and that it was up to the parents to educate the children in what to eat. This lack of communication among different doctors is even more marked between the different groups who produce school meals.

THE GOVERNMENT: Section 39 of the 1944 Education Act obliges Local Authorities to provide a meal every school day for every child that wants it. Departmental working parties in 1965 and 1975 further stated that the meal must be suitable in all respects to be the main meal of the day. Last year £400 million was paid for this service by the Government (which contributes 61 per cent of the costs) and Local Authorities (39 per cent) and another £200 million was paid by parents for their children's subsidised school dinners. This £600 million buys just over 1 million free school dinners for poor children and just over 4 million subsidised meals currently costing each child 30 pence a day, plus another half million free and often larger school meals eaten every day by teachers, catering and secretarial staffs and visitors, including the author. The Government is now bringing in a bill which will lift the obligation to provide not only the useful but depressing school meal of

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the last 30 years but also the obligation to provide anything at all. The 'needy' are still supposed to be catered for, though the quality and quantity is now up to the conscience of the individual authority and the needy will be recategorised so as to exclude half a million suddenly 'unneedy' children. Its intention is to save £200 million a year without touching what Mr Mark Carlisle refers to as 'hard education'. By leaving nasty decisions about implementing these cuts to Local Authorities, the Government hopes to save itself difficult choices and dirty hands, while still getting a gold star for decentralisation.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES: The Government's plans are causing glee in Conservative rural counties and deep gloom in Labour-controlled cities. Mr Barry Taylor, Chief Education Officer for Somerset, is looking forward to charging 'realistic prices' for snack foods in cash cafeterias. In Ashington, Northumberland, the local authority is already charging 10p per day for supervised sandwich eating, while in Gloucestershire, Mr Albert Bullough, Chief Education Officer, says that 70 per cent of the school meals bill goes on staffing and that employment levels must be reduced to cut costs. In darkest Lincolnshire, too, the Conservative council is looking forward to big savings by drastic cuts or, even better, entirely getting rid of the school meals service. Liverpool has already achieved Mr Bullough's heart's desire: Mrs Frances Hollinghurst has saved £5 million in labour costs through the introduction of a central cooking blast freezing unit, from which 'multipacks' of frozen dinners are sent out to the school kitchens where they are 'regenerated'. She already employs 50 per cent less staff and laments: 'There is nothing left to cut'. With 45 per cent free dinners and failing industries, Liverpool will have terrible decisions to make in implementing any cuts. Perhaps, like the Inner London Education Authority, they will decide to tighten their belts and make a two and a half per cent overall cut by 'maximising efficiency and eliminating waste', without cutting the school meals service.

THE TEACHERS: 'For many of the children here,' said one junior school headmaster, 'the school dinner is the most important event in the day.' But adult participants do not share the children's enthusiasm. 'From a selfish point of view,' said Mrs Helen Dance, Head of Archway School North London, 'we would love to get rid of school meals.' She herself, the two assistant heads, and the Second Master each do two dinner duties a week in order to get enough teacher supervision of the dining-room and queues. In 1968 the National Union of Teachers made dinner supervision voluntary for its members.

In spite of the great loathing teachers have for the exhausting business of queue control and their joy at ridding themselves of compulsory duties, over half of the entire teaching body still claims the free school meal daily, which is supposed only to go to those on duty. Having spent years forming the school dinner habit, teachers apparently go on eating them when dinner duties are minimal or non-existent and are surprisingly uncritical and unaware of the bland, boring and slightly metallic-flavoured food they fork in daily. They also have the fixed idea that education comes in books and therefore that nutrition is a subject to be taught in class, while what the children actually eat in their school meals is not the concern of educationalists.

THE ORGANISERS: School meals organisers administer the service and drop in on school kitchens about once a fortnight. They have home economics or institutional management qualifications and are ladies in both senses of the word, though there is said to be one in Brent who started off as a school cook. They emphasise their superior status over the cooks by dress, coiffure and handbag and expect undiscussed obedience. 'You have to keep your distance because of having to tell them off so often,' said one. This formal and distant relationship is emphasised by even senior cooks wearing the hygienic but confidence-sapping cap and overall. In one place the senior school meals organiser and her guests were personally served at an elegantly clothed table by the Cook Supervisor who, on finding she had served the main course (of school lunch) too soon after the tomato juice, said 'Shall I take it all away again, Mrs H.?' The result of this drawing-room condescension of many organisers to their manual staff is that little consultation

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takes place about kitchen lay-outs, choice of equipment and food contractors. This in turn results in a considerable waste of money and energy in inappropriate equipment and poor quality food. Ironically the organisers are themselves looked down on by home economics teachers. Miss A. J. Halsall, who runs Cheshire's school meals service, says that very few teachers will consider discussing nutritional projects around school meals. The rest consider catering beneath their interest.

THE MANUAL STAFF:

'No I wouldn't want to work in a school kitchen. Working in a school kitchen proves you have no qualifications.' (Twelve-year-old at Islington Green School.)

'There's no getting away from it; it's a very hard job.' (Cook Superintendent, Archway School.)

There are still school cooks in London who start work at 6 or 7 am in order to have cooked meals packed and ready for transport at 10.30 am. When the transported dinners are finally unpacked in junior and special schools, the food has so deteriorated that plate waste, according to a Liverpool survey, is about 15 lb per 160 children. The present obsession with serving cooked food whatever the quality means that much time and labour is spent on scrubbing massive pieces of heavy cooking equipment to meet high hygienic standards. Senior cooks all seem to have started off as kitchen helpers when their own children were young. Their hard work and dedication is impressive, but their attitudes to food are generally those of working people 30 years ago, thinly overlaid by infrequent training sessions. Mrs Jean Jukes, Superintendent (29 years service) and Mrs Rosie Golding, cook (26 years service), were very concerned that 'our children' should get 'a proper warm dinner', and work hard to provide a traditional English meal. Sadly, their efforts are misapplied, for 470 of the 550 paying children vote with their multiethnic feet down to the 'Grub Stop', the Kebab House and the Chinese take-away.

Dinner ladies supervise the queues and dining rooms. In a junior school, working 13 to 15 hours a week with free lunch and half pay during holidays, it's a nice little job, but trying to stop a 15-year-old muscling his way up the queue takes a lot of mental and physical energy and often gets the response 'You're not a teacher, you can't boss me.'

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES: One third of the manual workers in the school meals service belong to this union, so not surprisingly it takes an extremely conservative attitude towards the proposed cuts especially when they concern staffing levels. In fact their School Meals Charter wants a 15 per cent increase in manning levels, so that a pool of relief workers is always available. The union is absolutely against snack and cook freeze systems because they 'create unemployment and lower nutritional standards'. The first of these complaints is true, but the second is not. Snack and cook freeze systems can provide a better or worse meal than conventional cooking depending on the menu and the quality of the ingredients.

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Although the Charter makes very valid points about the appalling lack of consultation by the administration with the cooks over the employment of their own junior staff, health and safety, the choice of food contractors and so forth, the Charter's overall view shows the same lack of initiative that its members are encouraged to show in their jobs. The primary aim of the school meals service is to provide meals for children, not part-time jobs for their mothers.

THE CHILDREN: In 1959 Britain signed a declaration affirming that 'Mankind owes to the child the best it has to give'. Yet the children of Britain are about to be chewed up by the very people who individually are most concerned for them. Instead of hammering out a solution which will tighten up on education spending while still safeguarding the children's future health and education, Local Authorities, the Government, and teacher and school staff organisations are thinking primarily of their own short-term interests, while the future of the non-voting, non-unionised child is neglected.

'To spend an astronomical £400 million on something that is no more than a social service in our schools is nothing short of criminal when you see what the shortages really are'. (Mr David Hart, General Secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers.)

'I was horrified to discover that the only food in the house was bread and butter and a sack of potatoes which the father bought to make into chips'. (Dr Joyce Grice.)

In state schools it is assumed that children learn what to eat as part of the social training provided by parents. Since the educated and privileged are more likely to bring up their children with plenty of fresh food and relatively few sweets, their chances of raising a healthy family are greatly increased. The British class system has its own nutritional inertia. Malnutrition, which is quite common among the elderly and such children as those visited by Dr Grice, is as much a symptom of lack of education as lack of money. It is also a condition that most British doctors are unwilling to diagnose. What do children choose to eat?

'There's a roll with three slits in it, with egg, cheese and salad in them. I nearly always choose that with fruit yogurt afterwards'. (Miranda, 13, East Grinstead.)

'Chips'. (The reply of nearly every child asked at two schools in North London.)

A posh area like East Grinstead will have choices in the school cafeteria like Miranda's favourite rolls and fruit, yogurt plus cheese and biscuits and fresh fruit, because children there have been accustomed to like these foods. In Archway School in a poor area of London, with 48 nationalities among its children, the cash cafeteria wins over the local chippies only by serving chips and sausage rolls, chips and hamburgers, chips and anything, plus baked beans, tinned spaghetti, crisps, sweet biscuits, jelly, instant whip and orange and lemon squash. 'There are salads there every day, but what can you do if they won't eat them?' says Mrs Joan Mead, Cook Superintendent. Of course there are very few salads there because very few children will order them against the powerful influences of family habit, advertising and the fashions in eating among their friends.'

'No, I don't like school dinners because the dinner ladies won't give you small portions and once my friend's salad had a dead fly in it'. (Thomasina, 10, Liverpool junior school.)

'I don't eat cheese. Cheese gives you heart attacks'. (William, 13, who worried his teachers by choosing five puddings for lunch every day this term.)

Children are irrational, conservative and prejudiced eaters and not surprisingly, for their food habits are formed more by unconscious than conscious means. Like adults they most easily take to food which is sweet, salty, or crisply fried and usually have to be taught to enjoy the sour, the simple and the raw. Some middle class mothers will succeed in doing this; most very poor mothers will fail. And so unnecessary ill-health, both minor and chronic (which saps the energy and intelligence) and major and acute (which causes unemployment, debt and misery) will stretch into the next generation.

'In an essay entitled "Why I Like St Vedast's", to my surprise 90 per cent of the children mentioned the food'. (Mrs June Buchanan, Matron.)

There are schools which serve very unusual meals without linking them to specific nutritional education. At St Vedast's Independent School in Central London, infant, junior and senior children, teaching and catering staff all eat compost-grown whole wheat bread specially baked in Fulham, English butter, a varying selection of five hard and soft English cheeses, English salad vegetables (whole or in

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chunks), English fruit (dried fruit and nuts in winter), raw Channel Islands milk and honey bought direct from prime English bee-keepers. The animal fat content of this meal would have Dr Turner clutching at his heart, but it is otherwise nutritionally of the highest quality. Although the school's insistence on produce that is both the best and English makes the food cost per child about three times that of the Inner London Education Authority, because there is no cooking and very little preparation, the final meal cost is about the same. This approach will give children good eating habits and high standards but will not teach them to be discriminating in cafes, canteens and supermarkets.

THE FOOD:

> '... that fresh meat should be served on three days of the week. The other two days should be built around animal protein of other origin.' (Working party on the nutritional standard of the school dinner, 1965.)

> 'School stew is lumps of mud covered in water.' (Lewis, 9, Inner London Junior School.)

The nutritional regulations for school meals are now rather out of date. They mention only energy (880 kcal.) and protein (29gm.). In order to achieve these levels and comply with the regulations for meat content quoted above, the meals necessarily contain too much sweet and fried food (to reach the calorie level) and cheap fatty cuts of meat forced on school meals organisers (and children like Lewis) by rising prices. In the last fifteen years nutritionists have been moving disputatiously to a more or less agreed position. Less meat protein is now considered necessary or advisable, sugar is 'Pure White and Deadly', too much animal fat gives you heart conditions and the protein, vitamins, minerals and fibre found in fruit, vegetables and whole cereals are considered increasingly important.

If the Government, instead of removing nutritional requirements, were to take new advice from senior nutritionists, there would be a maximum level for sugar and saturated fats. The requirement for meat would be completely removed so that Local Authorities could choose from the cheaper and healthier milk, egg, fish and vegetable proteins. Doctors Taylor and Turner would also impose other standards such as iron, vitamin B, vitamin C, and fibre (Professor Bender thinks these would be unenforceable). According to the World Health Organisation's 1973 tables for safe levels of protein intake, the protein requirement in the meal could be lowered to 20gm. (where it already is according to Professor Bender and Miss Halsall). This would still provide 42 per cent of the day's protein for all but the teenage boys. The Local Authorities and the doctors would like to get rid of the 'suitable in all respects to be the main meal of the day' clause. It is high time to dispel the simplistic British conviction that meat, two veg. and a sweet exclusively constitute a balanced meal. A 'snack' meal may be less satisfying to the maternal instincts of the cooks but far better for the children.

Under these new regulations a school dinner might consist of thick lentil and vegetable soup (8fl.oz.), wholemeal bread (2oz.), low-fat spread, cheddar cheese (1oz.) and pickle, mixed peanuts and raisins (1oz.) and a glass of orange juice (5fl.oz.). There would be more soup and bread and spread for the hungry. The food cost of this meal would be about 18p, the protein content about 23gm. and the energy count about 660kcal. It contains minimum amounts of saturated fat and sugar and one third or more of the day's requirements for vitamins A B C D, calcium, and iron. Children quite like this kind of food and would like it more if they were involved from an early age in discussions and choices connected with school lunch.

In 1977-78 the average cost of a school dinner was 51.9p (now 60p). Of this 30.24p was spent on wages and administration (mostly on manual staff), 6.23p on 'other costs' (presumably mainly equipment, since a four-burner, heavy-duty stove now costs £1,000) and only 15.44p on food. Using the type of menu suggested here, much equipment could be sold off, at least one third fewer unskilled helpers employed, school meals organisers in their present form got rid of, and skilled senior cooks on a decent salary be made responsible for their own equipment staff costing etc. Under this system menus would be devised by a joint committee of cooks, teachers and senior children and would form the hub of the school's nutrition education programme. Children could thus learn the theory and the practice of discriminatory eating from an early age and have a proper opportunity to form habits which would give them a healthy, energetic adult life.

Even now it is not too late to get this Bill rewritten in a form which will still save a lot of money while it vastly improves the nutritional regulations for school meals and enhances the prospects of all children, especially of poor children, to make the most of their future. So start fighting. Write to Mark Carlisle, Minister of Education, with a copy to Neil Kinnock, Labour shadow minister, to the members of the Committee sitting on the Education No.2 Bill and demand to know your local Education Committee's precise intentions, particularly in regard to children now being given free school meals, or sign Child Poverty Action Group's petition. Even a Government as myopic as this one can yet be persuaded to see that £200 million saved now by hitting school meals over the head with a blunt instrument will only be paid twice over by the Health Service in the future.

ECONOMIC MONITOR

Edited by David Blackaby

How education helps

THE LEVEL of an individual's education has a significant impact on both the probability of becoming unemployed, and on the duration of those spells of unemployment, according to a recent study by Nickell. He establishes that the incidence of unemployment declines rapidly with the number of years spent in school, up to a total of 12 years; after that there is no further decline, which indicates that further education after leaving school does not reduce the likelihood of unemployment. Each year of schooling up to 12 years reduces the probability of becoming unemployed by around 25 per cent, regardless of an individual's age, and should he become unemployed his expected duration falls by just over 4 per cent. Furthermore, the possession of qualifications is shown to have a strong influence; qualifications at GCE ordinary level reduce the chance of becoming unemployed by about two-thirds, and induces a fall in expected duration of 12 per cent. (R. Apps)

Education and Lifetime Patterns of Unemployment, S. J. Nickell, *Journal of Political Economy*, October 1979.

Why we became big savers

TRADITIONAL economic analysis suggests that as an individual's income increases so too do his savings, and as income falls so do savings. Recent evidence (1973-1974) contradicts this; a rising savings ratio is observed at a time of falling real income. Is this, as has been suggested, because of data inadequacies or is it merely a reaction of individuals to offset the effect of higher inflation? Armstrong helps to explain the phenomenon by analysing the nature of savings.

In the national accounts, personal saving is defined as the acquisition of physical assets (e.g. home purchases) and financial assets (FA), less borrowing and the acquisition of financial liabilities (FL). The latter depends on general credit conditions and the willingness and ability of banks and other institutions to lend. If FA is unchanged and FL is contracted then clearly savings will rise and, with a given disposable income, consumption will fall. Lending from financial institutions to the personal sector fell in 1972-1974, which explains a rising savings ratio concomitant with falling real income. (R. MacDonald)

An Analysis of Personal Savings in the UK, A. G. Armstrong, The Manchester School, December 1979.

Sanity in the public sector

THE ORIGINS of Mrs Thatcher's 1979 public expenditure cuts are traced to the inadequate measurements of public service output. No productivity gains are imputed to the labour-intensive public service sector; so price increases, as a result of wage increases, will be larger than in the non-government sector – and the ratio of public spending to Gross Domestic Product will rise. The problem is accentuated by the fact that public service salaries tend to fall behind private pay, and then catch up, in a rather erratic manner. This leads to pressures to cut back in the catch-up phase.

The weakness of cash limits, which were introduced to safeguard the tax rate and borrowing requirement against adverse relative price changes, is that they take a short-term view of a long-term problem and may result in unbalanced government programmes. An improved measure of output and cost in government services would enable development to be planned more coherently without the recurrent disruption of programme cuts and the unjustified suppression of relative incomes in the government sector.

Public Expenditure: Policy and Control, R. W. R. Price, NIESR, November 1979.

Hidden costs of redundancy

THE BALANCE of payments imposes a tight external constraint on the government's ability to expand economic activity. Hence the question: why open Redcar, which would use imported ore and over 55 per cent foreign coking coal (of which the NCB has a surplus) and close Corby, a steel plant designed to use indigenous low grade ore and domestic coal? Considering the whole cost to the economy, it is estimated that if Redcar were kept out of operation, over 21,000 jobs would be saved – 11,000 in the steel industry and its suppliers and a further 10,000 elsewhere in the economy. Studies showing the relationship between unemployment, crime and health indicate that if Redcar were kept out of production for five years, around 1,100 lives and 13,000 cases of mental illness would be saved, with further savings on prisons, police and courts. At a saving of £40m to BSC, the cost to the rest of the public sector would be over £105m, before redundancy payments. Opening Redcar and maintaining Corby would show a profit. Present BSC output is half that forecast 10 years ago: 'In the absence of import controls, the demand for BSC steel will continue to stagnate and may even decline.'

How to run a Company and Run Down an Economy: the Effects of Closing Down Steel-making in Corby, B. Rowthorn and T. Ward, *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, December 1979.

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EDUCATION
Anna Coote

Schools actively encourage underachievement in some subjects

Why girls don't like maths

LESS THAN TWENTY per cent of school girls who are offered the chance to study physics in the fourth and fifth forms actually take the course, compared with more than half the boys. And boys outnumber girls by nearly four to one in A level maths classes, compared with a much smaller ratio (1.4:1) in A level subjects as a whole. Is this caused by some innate difference between girls and boys, or by the way children are taught in schools?

A conference on sex differentiation and schooling in Cambridge last week produced strong evidence to suggest that dramatic improvements in girls' performance can be achieved quite quickly – and even cheaply – once course content and teaching methods are changed. It is still widely believed in Britain that girls under-achieve in maths and physical sciences because they are 'born that way' – a belief reinforced by signs that boys have greater 'visio-spatial' ability than girls (useful for solving problems, especially those involving diagrams). However, North American researchers have established that this ability is learned rather than inherited, and that boys learn it more easily as a result of socially induced differences.

Lisa Serbin, psychology professor at Concordia University, Montreal, has found that there is a significant link between visio-spatial ability in children and a preference for certain toys which have a typically masculine image, such as construction sets. When girls and boys are given tests in spatial visualisation, the boys do far better than the girls at first; but when both sexes are given special training in the kind of task they will be set, the girls end up surpassing the boys – which suggests that all they needed was practice. Ms Serbin has shown, too, that teachers can play a key role in encouraging interest in 'masculine' toys. If they make a point of introducing the toys to the girls and encouraging them to play with them, the girls are then more inclined to select them when teachers are absent. In other words, intervention by teachers can be critical in forming children's interest in toys which will help them develop skills useful in later years for mathematics and the physical sciences.

According to Carol Jacklin of Stanford University, children are far more likely to be treated in a stereotypical manner by adults who aren't familiar with them, than by their parents. When a primary school teacher takes over a new class of five year olds, they are an unknown quantity: the teacher may develop an exaggerated view of their sex-role differences – and treat them accordingly – because at that stage there are few other ways of identifying them. Ms Jacklin, who is co-author with Eleanor Maccoby of the key text *Psychology of Sex Differences*, claims that children do not develop much in the way of typically 'masculine' and 'feminine' behaviour before they reach school.

Research by Carol Dweck, psychology professor at Illinois University, shows that girls learn 'helplessness' from the feedback they get from their teachers. Boys are criticised far more often than girls, but they are criticised for different things. According to Ms Dweck's study, almost half (44.6 per cent) of 'negative feedback' directed by teachers at boys' academic work is concerned with non-intellectual aspects, such as sloppy presentation. Girls, on the other hand, are almost always criticised (88.2 per cent of the time) for the intellectual content of their work. Teachers attributed boys' failure to lack of motivation eight times more often than girls'. The kind of criticism boys receive, Ms Dweck claims, allows them to dismiss evidence of failure as a symptom of the teacher's attitude towards them, or as a result of their own lack of effort. This in turn leads them to believe that difficulties are surmountable. (Next year they might have a different teacher, or they can try harder to succeed). Girls, meanwhile, interpret the criticism they get as bearing on their own ability, and this may encourage them to be pessimistic about future achievements and less inclined to relish a difficult challenge. (If you think you're no good at something, you don't want to go on proving it.) This may help to explain why girls prefer subjects such as English and history, where new knowledge is accumulated gradually, rather than maths and science, where pupils are more often confronted suddenly with difficult new concepts.

Of course, not *all* girls learn helplessness, they simply have more opportunity to do so. And in the same way, boys have a better chance of developing confidence in their ability to overcome difficulty. Ms Dweck has conducted experiments which show that boys *and* girls who are 'mastery oriented' (confident) can overcome confusion on the way to solving a problem much more easily than girls *and* boys who have developed a general sense of helplessness.

Elizabeth Fennema, education professor at Wisconsin University, who is widely acknowledged as an expert on sex differences and maths teaching, says that girls' (very slightly) lower skills in spacial visualisation are relatively insignificant in prompting them to opt out of maths in high school. Far more important is the amount of confidence they have in their ability to do well (regardless of their *actual* ability). Her research corroborates Carol Dweck's findings that girls and boys commonly attribute their success and failure to different factors. She points out, too, that girls are less likely than boys to perceive mathematics as being useful to them in the future and therefore have less interest in the subject. Maths are viewed as a typically male domain – by boys more than by girls – and there are signs that boys communicate their opinion to girls, making them feel excluded.

Ms Fennema described a brief programme of intervention which sets out to explain to pupils, teachers and parents in a school – by means of videotapes and workshop sessions – how sex differences develop in relation to maths education, and how they can be discouraged. When the programme was tested, it made a significant impact on the number of girls enrolling in maths courses.

Alison Kelly, sociology lecturer at Manchester University, has developed a somewhat different intervention programme to encourage girls to take more interest in science, and she will be testing it in UK schools between now and 1983. It is based on the little-recognised (though obvious) premise that girls and boys will not develop equal abilities if schools simply refrain from treating them unequally. Male experience and male values predominate to such an extent in society at large that a 'neutral' policy will simply perpetuate the status quo. She proposes (among a broad range of strategies) that schools should recognise that girls develop different interests – especially in home life and human relations. These should be valued as highly as boys' interests and built upon in science classes – for example, by using domestic items in experiments and by emphasising the relevance of science to everyday life (such as the chemistry of food processing). She suggests schools should try out single-sex classes in science and cites one example of a school in Ashton Under Lyme, where an experiment in single-sex science proved popular with pupils and teachers.

Research by Dale Spender of London University's Institute of Education and Katherine Clarricoates of Hull University, provides evidence that boys 'are used to having their experience legitimated as the substance of education'; they will react to subjects being taught in a 'sissy' style with noisy and disruptive behaviour. Girls, on the other hand, tend to react to boy-oriented teaching by withdrawing into silence and passivity. Teachers seeking to control their classes will therefore aim at capturing the boys' interest, so that a vicious circle develops.

There is now a wealth of evidence that schools and teachers actively, if unconsciously, encourage sex differences. If they are seriously interested in promoting equal opportunity, they will have to make a lot of changes. Unfortunately, the structure of Britain's education system is such that it is virtually impossible to enforce a positive strategy, even if one were developed at a national level – and that alone would require a massive shift in official attitudes. Teacher-training colleges are not co-ordinated nationally: each one

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does almost exactly what it likes. Local Education Authorities are a law unto themselves and many exert little or no influence over school curricula. Within schools, heads don't like to interfere with the autonomy of classroom teachers. When any kind of intervention is suggested, there is a tendency to decry it as 'social engineering' – as if society were not already 'engineered' by our education system.

The Sex Discrimination Act, which outlaws 'less favourable treatment' of girls in education, is useless for promoting positive intervention, and even its 'preventive' measures are widely ignored by schools. One head teacher who has been visiting schools in the West Country, says he found a great many were still administering woodwork to boys and needlework to girls, unaware that they were breaking the law. In the absence of any other strategy, the problem of sex difference might usefully be injected into the debate about a common 'core' curriculum for all the nation's schools.

HOUSING
Andrew Arden

New Bill gives green light to winklers and gentrifiers

Turning the poor out of doors

THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT seems to have abandoned the long tradition of labelling Bills according to their contents. The Tories' new industrial relations legislation is known euphemistically as an 'Employment Bill'. And what will be their new Rent Act is tucked away in the middle sections of a 'Housing Bill'. For not only does the Bill make important provisions for the public housing sector, but it also drastically alters the legal status of future lettings by private landlords.

The public sector provisions were heralded as long ago as 1976 when the Conservative Party document *The Right Approach* declared an intent to give council tenants a statutory 'right to buy' their homes. Now we have the details: three years' residence qualifies a council tenant to make the purchase; discounts will be allowed against purchase price reflecting the years of residence; and there is a schedule of exceptions, when the right cannot be exercisied, which includes short-life accommodation, homes adapted for the physically handicapped and sheltered accommodation for the elderly. Many housing associations will be treated in the same way as local authorities – a blow to the voluntary housing movement.

The exercise will not save public money, as the Tories claim. On the contrary, as Bernard Kilroy reported (NS 23.11.79), it will produce a considerable loss. And it will, of course, restrict the number of homes available for families on the waiting list, for the homeless, and for others who need to move out of sub-standard accommodation in the public or private sector.

It has been argued (NS 27.4.79) that the best quality housing stock will be creamed off by the 'right to buy' policy. The government refutes this. But in either event, people who buy from the public sector will have to cope with unprecedentedly bad maintenance and repair problems. In the inner cities, the sort of property which is likely to be purchased is recently municipalised stock, scheduled for improvement by authorities who never quite got around to it. And evidence has recently come to light that the so-called 'better', newly-built council stock has suffered from cost-cutting construction, thanks to an artifically depressed Housing Cost Yardstick (which measures central government subsidies for new building by authorities). It has been claimed that selling council houses will help break down class barriers. But most former council tenants will find themselves still tied to working-class ghettos, old and new.

Resistance ruled out

IN ANTICIPATION of Clay Cross style resistance, the Bill reserves to central government extensive default powers for combatting recalcitrant councils. Moreover, it enables the government to base its annual subsidy to an authority on what it thinks that authority *ought* to have charged in rents, rather than on what it actually charged. It will also abolish the present limit on the size of the working balance in a council's housing revenue account – a restriction which has previously helped to keep rents down.

Council tenants are to be given a form of security of tenure similar to that currently enjoyed by private tenants under the Rent Acts. This will be a popular gesture, but a relatively cheap one. Few council tenants are evicted nowadays for any reason other than those which will remain as 'grounds for possession' under the new law. The discretionary element in a decision to evict for such reasons as rent arrears, nuisance and annoyance, or damage to property, will simply be transferred from the local Housing Department to the county court – and there is no evidence that judges can be relied upon to be any more impartial than council officials.

Security of tenure is really being given as an essential *quid pro quo* for the other main innovation of the Bill. Tenants in the public and private sectors will be permitted to take part in the improvement grant programme, formerly restricted to owner-occupiers. Improvement grants have been with us since 1949, in something approaching their present form. They have been notoriously ineffective as a means of combatting deteriorating housing conditions. The main beneficiaries have been landlords pushing their properties into a cycle of eviction- improvement-gentrification. Now tenants are being asked to contribute to the cost of rectifying past neglect of their homes (which has been especially acute in the private sector). When grants of 60 and 75 per cent are offered, it seems as if no one can lose. But when the tenants themselves do not have full control over the total cost of improvements (since they must meet official standards to qualify for grants), and when grants commonly represents a percentage of a sum in the region of £5,000, one begins to wonder where the tenants will find their share of the cash. There will be no question of raising a mortgage if they are on monthly or weekly tenancies.

What protection will they have against being evicted once they have paid for improvements? A landlord whose tenant is seeking an improvement grant will have to issue a certificate promising to keep the property available for letting. But local authorities will have a discretion to waive this requirement. Other grant-aid 'reforms' are similarly designed to minimise obstacles to the gentrification cycle.

The omissions of the Housing Bill are no less depressing. There is nothing significant (for example) about how housing should be allocated, or who should have priority. There are no increased resources to back up the Homeless Persons Act, which is floundering for lack of finance. And apart from increased access to grants for repairs, there is nothing aimed at improving housing conditions, or strengthening the inadequate powers of local authorities to tackle unfitness or serious disrepair in their areas.

Tribunal powers axed

AS FOR THE Rent Act which is hidden in the proposed legislation, this is allegedly designed to bring private, rented property back on to the market. It is worth remembering that the Tory Rent Act of 1957, which had a similar objective, was followed by the greatest decline in private accommodation since the war.

Under the last government, the Rent Acts were reviewed by the Department of Environment. The results were never published and probably never will be. However, no less than seven recommendations submitted during the review by the British Property Federation are included in the Tories' new Bill.

One such recommendation seeks to abolish the rent tribunal's power to grant up to six months' security of tenure to tenants who do not enjoy the full benefit of Rent Act protection – whose ranks include the substantial numbers of tenants of resident landlords. The tribunals will retain their rent-fixing role over these 'restricted lettings', but tenants who apply to the rent tribunal for their rents to be registered at a reasonable level will almost invariably be confronted with a retaliatory notice to quit.

At present, a notice to quit served after application for registration of rent is automatically deferred for six months, unless the tribunal orders a shorter period to be substituted. Similarly, if a notice to quit has already been served, a tenant can gain up to six months' security by applying to the rent tribunal. These powers will not apply to lettings which start after the Bill becomes law. Instead, the county court will have jurisdiction to provide a stay of up to three months before a possession order becomes effective. Unlike the rent tribunals' present power, which enables tenants to reapply before the six-month period expires, for further time in which to quit, there will be no scope for renewed applications to the county court.

Rent tribunals may seem intimidating to the average tenant, but compared with a court, they are oases of informality. They also have a justified reputation for relative fairness, and a degree of wordly perception that normally leads to reasonably balanced results. What will the tenant have to deal with now? For a start, a summons to the county court will probably arrive before the tribunal has dealt with the application for a registered rent. Many tenants who receive such a summons

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believe it is actually an order to quit, and simply leave without even taking advice. If they do take advice, they are likely to find that, for what will be considered an insignificant gain of three months' security, legal aid will not be available to help them present their case in court.

Courts are notoriously intimidating places. They are also highly unpredictable, even to lawyers who are familiar with their vagaries. In any one court, there may be up to three regular judges, often with a 'substitute' who is an unknown quantity. One judge may be humane, perhaps kind, perhaps wise: he may try to deal realistically with the parties before him, and apply the law honestly and fairly. In his case, it may be possible to predict the outcome of the case with some degree of certainty. Another judge, however, may form an opinion of the litigants before him so quickly and stick to it so firmly that it may be impossible to secure a victory which goes against the grain of his inclination. A third may be a well-known opponent of the Rent Acts, so that few who appear before him can hope to benefit from the full three months' security. Yet another judge may seem to have the gravest difficulty following evidence and argument, or rendering decisions which make legal (let alone practical) sense. Some judges are pompous or fierce, so that even the most hardened practising lawyer (not to mention a defendant whose home is under threat) can find a day before them an unpleasant or even terrifying ordeal. This is what is being substituted for the rent tribunals: advisers to tenants may often be forced to admit that the experience will not be justified by the potential gain.

Eviction made easy

IT IS IMPORTANT to bear all this in mind when assessing the Bill's proposal for 'shorthold' tenancies. At present, a tenancy is protected unless it falls within the list of exceptions (which includes tenants of resident landlords, tenancies where board is provided and student lettings). This protection enables a tenant to remain in possession once the contract of tenancy comes to an end, and eviction may be ordered only on specified grounds (eg. rent arrears, nuisance and annoyance, premises required for landlord, damage to property).

The Bill proposes to introduce tenancies of one to five years, to be known as 'shortholds'. There are some superficial protective measures: the landlord should provide the tenant with a notice, set out in a prescribed form, that he or she is to be a shorthold tenant and that possession may therefore be ordered on that ground alone. If a fair rent has not been registered, application should be made by landlord or tenant or both, within 28 days of the start of the tenancy. However, should the landlord have 'omitted' to serve the requisite notice on the tenant, or have 'omitted' to ensure that a fair rent was registered before or after the tenancy commenced, then the county court will enjoy a discretion, if it considers it 'just and equitable' to do so, to waive these requirements and retrospectively deem the tenancy to have been a shorthold letting. What one judge may consider just and equitable could appear the very opposite to another.

When the one-to-five year period runs out, the landlord need not evict. He may simply leave the tenant in, until it suits him to reclaim vacant possession. Indeed, the tenancy agreement may itself provide for such an indefinite continuance. All the landlord will need to do is to serve not less than three months' notice of his intention to go to court, and when he arrives there, the court will have only a very limited power to grant the tenant a few, further days before eviction.

At present, when a court makes a final order of possession, it is normally suspended for four weeks. Under the new Bill, this time is reduced to 14 days in most circumstances (including shorthold and evasive lettings), unless 'exceptional hardship' would be caused, in which case there is a new statutory maximum of six weeks. Here too, some judges will be quick to find exceptional hardship, while others may find such a concept beyond their imagination.

Threat to existing tenants

THE WORST ASPECT of these new shorthold provisions is that existing protected or statutory tenants will not be immune from them. If a landlord can 'persuade' a protected or statutory tenant to enter into a 'new' agreement – for example, one which offers a fixed rent for the next three years – and the tenant, unadvised as most tenants are, agrees to accept the new deal, then the tenant becomes a shorthold tenant (for the three years) and when that term expires, may be evicted whenever the landlord wishes.

Controlled tenancies are to be abolished 'at a stroke', even though relatively few people still hold them, and most are elderly and among the poorest and least able to cope in the whole of the private sector; and even though it has long been possible for a landlord to convert a controlled tenancy into a regulated tenancy (with higher rent) simply by installing the basic household amenities which so many controlled tenants still lack. The Bill proposes that new 'fair' rents can be registered every two years, instead of every three as at present – which will obviously speed up increases. If there is no tenant in occupation two years after a fair rent has been registered, a landlord can apply for the fair rent to be struck off the register. It can take several months for a new tenant, starting from scratch, to get a fair rent registered and during that time he or she will have to pay whatever price the landlord asks. At present, the reduction in rent which almost always follows a first registration takes effect from the date of application, so that landlords cannot benefit from delaying tactics. But under the new law, fair rents will only take effect from the date when the Rent Officer actually reaches a decision. Deposits of up to two months' rent may be demanded from new tenants, without risk of offending against the premium restrictions.

The Tory strategy is clear. 'Natural wastage', encouraged by more rapidly increasing rents, will cope with existing tenants, while almost complete exemption from Rent Act control will deal with new ones. Private sector tenants are notoriously poorly organised. By applying the technique of 'decontrol on vacant possession', which attacks one individual at a time, rather than classes or blocks of tenants, the government will be able to take full advantage of that fact.

Rob Edwards

It's worse in Scotland

THE 'TENANTS' RIGHTS, ETC. (Scotland) Bill', published before Christmas and due for its second reading next Monday, 14 January, is as misleadingly titled as its English and Welsh counterpart. The 'Etc.' covers a multitude of sins including what amounts to a dangerous new Scottish Rent Act. Broadly speaking, the provisions of the English and Welsh Bill, for the public and private sectors, are included in the Scottish version – but there are some important distinctions.

Something very similar to the proposed housing subsidy system described by Andrew Arden has been in operation in Scotland for two years. Scottish local authorities are given their annual housing subsidy in one overall block grant known as the Housing Support Grant. While this allows local government more freedom in determining how to spend their allocation, it also gives central government a much more direct control over the level of total subsidy than that currently enforced in England and Wales. Next year's grant has been cut in real terms by well over £60m (about 23 per cent) and in so doing, Malcolm Rifkind, the Scottish Office Minister for Home Affairs and the Environment, said that he thought it would be 'reasonable' that next year's rent increases should be 'between an average of £1.37 to £1.40 per house per week' – an increase of 27 per cent. There can be no doubt that the new English system, if enacted, will be used as the Scottish one already has been – as a useful tool for cutting public expenditure and raising council rents.

In the Bill's provisions for council house sales the Scottish Tories are both more canny and more dogmatic. The prospect of bitter local-central government conflict is neatly side-stepped. Instead of the Secretary of State being the final judge and jury in the event of a recalcitrant council refusing or delaying sales, in Scotland the little-known Lands Tribunal is to adjudicate disputes. The English Bill makes a token concession to rural authorities, allowing them to impose restrictions on resale, but this is not included in the Scottish Bill. Rural authorities are understandably alarmed that the combined impact of financial cutbacks and enforced sales will critically deplete the quantity and quality of their comparatively few council houses: in the Islands, for instance, councils own less than a fifth of the housing stock, compared with 54 per cent in Scotland as a whole.

The otherwise-welcome, if somewhat overdue, package of public sector tenants' rights known as the 'tenants' charter' is seriously flawed. The Scottish Tories, for reasons best known to themselves, have omitted any notion of giving tenants the right to be consulted on landlord decisions that affect them, in spite of their English counterparts' belief that such consultation 'has a considerable part to play in reducing vandalism and in preventing the emergence of difficult-to-let estates'. In the security of tenure provisions for council tenants, the Scottish Bill reintroduces 'under-occupation' as a valid ground for eviction – although some ill-defined 'suitable alternative accommodation' does have to be provided. The danger is that this will allow local authorities to force, say, an elderly couple out of a house in which they have lived all their lives, but which is strictly speaking too large for them. There is no justification for such a power in view of the shortage of one-or two-apartment council houses.

Finally, the proposed legislation on local authority house allocation in Scotland is rather more imaginative than south of the border. The widespread use of residential requirements is to be substantially restricted and local authorities are to be prevented from requiring a minimum residency period before making the offer of a council house. Ironically, these relatively progressive provisions are due to a major piece of recently-completed research on allocations policies carried out under the auspices of the Scottish Housing Advisory Committee. In the Scottish Bill's last and meanest gesture, this useful quango is abolished.

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American Diary

☐ Despite murmurs from the usual sources that something nasty and Soviet was afoot in Kabul, I determined to put politics behind me for one week. I told myself way back that detente was finished – the death knell was Carter's amiable reception of the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Whatever the Russians were planning for Afghanistan, I thought, would not alter the fact that the US considers the country to be firmly within the Soviet sphere of influence, just as Indo-China, the Caribbean and Central America are within its own.

Geopolitically, imperialists cannot be caught with their pants down outside their sphere of influence. A Russian putsch in Kabul would therefore be no embarrassment to Washington. On the contrary, it would stimulate much merriment that I prefer not to hear. The maniacal glee with which Mr Brzezinski likes to regale listeners on the subject of Soviet perfidy, and the patronising wisecrack which Dr Kissinger unloosens upon countries too geopolitically insignificant to count in his *Weltanschauung*. In his memoirs Kissinger's only reference to Khyber was a lame joke about its name, Pushtoonistan – 'the subcontinent had been deprived of my wisecracks long enough'.

☐ To escape the mad dogs, I flew to New York, and moved in at the Harvard Club. For more than a decade, the club has been precariously perched between the urbanity of 5th Avenue and the erotica of 6th. But now erotica are replaced by office buildings whose inhabitants are fixated on the alimentary canal rather than the vaginal and the urethral. 'Canaan Health Food', 'General Nutrition Center', 'Sunshine Fresh' and 'Burger King' ('Home of the Whopper') now thrive, while the one remaining sex shop offers 'big discounts'. Not long ago, to come here you had to have Harvard on your mind, or ranker pursuits. I can't say whether Harvard men were more numerous in the second category than the first, but the upshot was impending bankruptcy. Having from inception been a men's retreat, into which women were only admitted through a special entrance, to eat a special lunch, and wee in a suite known as the Cambridge Rooms, the club resisted much longer than the university. But between bankruptcy and female emancipation, the board was forthright. It accepted women members, and became a private hotel to anyone veteran of a year at Harvard.

☐ Therefore, up to the William Lyon Mackenzie King room I went, instructions for the installation of a child's cot preceding me, past the oryx, bison and wildebeeste on the panelling, around the cheery fire (on 18 January 1979, the club mortgage was burned therein), and along a hallway adorned with the Harvard delegation — Businessmen's Military Instruction Camp, Plattsburg, August 1915. Canada's one-time premier received three degrees from Harvard, the doctoral one now rather affected by wall seepage, perhaps from the saunas and squash courts above. From them came rhythmic thumping and thwacking – predictable, and rather lulling. I imagined how the Military Instruction Camp must have thumped and thwacked in Plattsburg, 65 years ago, while around the great fire Theodore Roosevelt, the inspiration for the camps, plotted to get the United States into the war, and himself back into the Presidency, at a single stroke. If Roosevelt's over-sized coffee-cup (still in use) contained real caffeine, it is little wonder that he was jumpy, trigger-happy and obnoxious. Cup and saucer require two hands or a shooting stick to support them. It is inconceivable that such a caffeine addict could possibly have slaughtered as many animals as he claimed. The bull elephant, which looks down from the mantel of the great hall, is merely Roosevelt's by legend. The club librarian doesn't know who shot it, but he swears Roosevelt didn't.

☐ I will pass quickly over luncheon (wart hog and water buck. Africa 1906). Evening. I went downtown to see a play about Amedeo Modigliani by a new playwright named Dennis McIntyre. Poor Modigliani is also a Harvard trophy. His visage, wasted by poverty, tuberculosis, and addiction, was cast on his deathbed by Jacques Lipschitz and sits in store at Harvard's Foss Museum.

But McIntyre has brought him tensely, brilliantly back to life, circa 1916, when the inner rot began. The action is entirely contained in speech between Maurice Utrillo and Chaim Soutine, Leopold Zborowski, his agent, Beatrice Hastings, his second-to-last lover, and Guillaume Cheron, the critic and art speculator whose cigarette butt Modigliani scavenges, and whose imperious rejection unhinges him.

☐ I nearly suggested to the librarian that he might mount Modigliani in a corner of his beautiful den. Club members are not after all unaesthetic. Had not Bernard Berenson been of their kind, and bequeathed the *alma mater* his Tuscan villa and treasures? Club brochures invite members to take in the villa on its Northern Italian tour. They, like old B.B., appreciate a rare trophy when they see one. I was dissuaded by the reflection that Modigliani would always fall short of wildebeeste as clubman's decor. Even so, if his face had been a shade less hollowed, the grimace less bizarre, or had he been wearing horn-rims, then the piece could have been recognised as an authentic Lipschitz, and displayed in the old ladies' waiting room, beneath John Singer Sargent's *The Chessgame*.

☐ Berenson, that unctuous, serpentine profiteer in the Boston fashions of his day, connects vaguely with my brief excursion into connoisseurship uptown. At the time of his demise, Nelson Rockefeller was in his chambers consulting a young lady about a project engendering considerable passion. Petty details about the time, and the absence of the Governor's socks induced error over the passion's nature. To the end, this was to gold, not flesh.

The project was the reproduction for sale of part of his collection of porcelain, sculpture, modern and folk art. If, Rockefeller reasoned, he could displace the significance of the object in art, substituting the aesthetic value of its collector's name, there need be no limit to the profits to be made by reproducing the items and authenticating that the original belonged to the famous collector. To East 57th, therefore, I made my way, to the newly opened Nelson Rockefeller collection. You buzz to be admitted into a reverent hush, so suitable to a contemplative viewing of *copies* of an irreplaceable collector's collection. An early 19th century American embroidery bears a card informing of an unusual photographic process which makes the threads of the original eagle look, under glass, like the Rockefeller original. I picked up an armorial plate which had been hand-decorated to match every detail of its late 17th-early 18th century Chinese original.

☐ I confess to having felt at that moment overcome by philistinism. 'I want to see the real thing.' I yelled, and rushed out into a cab. My excursion ended at the Metropolitan Museum, where a well-regarded exhibition of late-imperial Austro-Hungarian costumes is on display. The exhibit I found most deeply affecting was a black silk and lace blouse worn by Empress Elizabeth on her assassination day in 1898. It is said that the assassin was so adept the lady didn't know she had been struck a mortal gash, five inches across her heart. The blood was subsequently salted and washed away, and an expert seamstress found, to bite back her grief and stitch the material together.

Thence to America for our edification. I viewed with foreboding this trophy of the revolutionary impulse, invisibly mended as if the Empire had never been cut down. Well, it hasn't, has it?

Claudia Wright

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ An air of refinement should be brought to Stockton High Street's public loos, a councillor says. Former Conservative Deputy Mayor, Councillor Stephen Smalles, thinks the 'Men' and 'Women' signs on the conveniences hark back to an image of the hard, tough North-east. He wants them to be changed to 'Ladies' and 'Gentlemen', so eradicating the town's 'cloth cap' impression given to visitors. – *Evening Gazette* (Leo Frain)

☐ Lucky Jim Dixon was the first anti-hero; a young middle-class tutor at an English University . . . and how Amis used him to satirise the academic racket and cultural pretensions! Almost made you sick laughing. Here's *Lucky Jim* back again, in our fine, maroon-and-golden classics binding. – *Literary Guild Review* (M. White)

☐ Are not the RAF pilots of low-flying jets potentially the next First of the Few? I am sure that the articulate Lucinda Tollworthy (December 21) knows what that means. In a future war they would be the first to go; and in our defence. Because they represent the possibility of every Lucinda (a name that also conjures up courage and skill in horsemanship) to ride ponies in a free country, cannot she and others who find them a nuisance get their priorities right, wish them Godspeed in their incredibly dangerous work and safe, happy landings? – Letter in *The Times* (Mark Wilson)

☐ Cole Lesley joined Sir Noel as a valet when he was 22 and known as plain Lesley Cole. But Sir Noel called him Cole Lesley for five years before realising his mistake. Then he insisted he should change his name to Cole Lesley. – *Daily Telegraph* (James Stanners)

☐ Obscene stuff. We saw the sort of thing when Mr Blackburn brought some of it to show us. It was so awful that I told my clerk. 'Put it in the safe. Lock it up so the secretary cannot see it.' – *Guardian Gazette* (Peter Anderson)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Alternative to doomsday

From Lesley & David Aers

Edward Thompson's article (NS 21/28 Dec) describes powerfully yet another example of the control over the mass media by the state and the controllers of capitalist enterprise. The 'management of opinion', as Edward Thompson calls it, pertains not only to decisions concerning nuclear missiles but to the versions of the long war in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia fed to the British public, the account of the practices of the white ruling power in South Africa, versions of industrial confict in England, and indeed to everything. His article states what he has discussed more fully elsewhere and what many others have been analysing over the last few years, although this has been given far too little notice by 'respectable' liberal opinion in this country – the gradual erosion of civil liberties, the strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the state, and the greater powers allowed to the forces of 'law and order'. But Edward Thompson's admirable comments beg at least two vital questions.

In his article he assumes that 'the British people' (as opposed to official 'Britain') are on the whole anxious to defend and extend political democracy and civil liberties, and dislike what is happening; but there is no attempt to substantiate this central assumption. Perhaps it is correct, but precisely what makes Edward Thompson believe that 'the British people' share this fundamental commitment to social democratic politics? The decision to elect the present Tory party with its public enough manifesto into power cannot be ignored. There may be a temptation to blame the media (along with the deficiencies of the present Labour Party) for the results of the election. And yet alternative information was available, and is often discussed at public meetings and by liberal-radical publications. Edward Thompson's sources in this article are not obscure – we do not yet live in a South Africa, Chile, or Russia. So we must consider the possibility that the 'management of opinion' has indeed succeeded in its task, and that 'the British people' do not now (if they ever did) have a commitment to democracy. If the majority of people do not share this commitment, we must face up to it. Milton had to do something like this in 1659-60 when he acknowledged that the people would not oppose the return of the Stuart monarch.

This brings us to our last point. To combat both the erosion of our liberties and (specifically) the arrival of the Cruise missiles, it seems that urgent collective action is necessary. But Edward Thompson makes no suggestion about present action, apart from getting up to switch the television off and advising a future Labour government what to do. Is this striking silence itself an indication of the absence of any organisation even potentially capable of stimulating 'the British people' to oppose the steps to Doomsday that are outlined here? If so, why have the people failed to generate such an organisation? What practical initiatives would Edward Thompson (or like-minded citizens) propose?

Smithies Cottage, Troston, Suffolk

From Richard Taylor

In his important and timely article, Edward Thompson draws together a number of central concerns for socialists in the Eighties. Since the late-Sixties the extra-Parliamentary Left has tended to ignore the international and defence dimensions of the struggle for socialism and to concentrate almost exclusively on the more immediate issues of class struggle in the economic context. Part of the value of Thompson's article is in the linking of the present (preposterous) proposals for the development of the Cruise missile programme to the wider issues of the ever-increasing power of the modern state and the consequent diminution in freedom. Even more important though is his reaffirmation of the policy of 'positive neutralism' – of a 'third way' of socialist humanism.

This was the cornerstone of the first New Left of the late-Fifties. But the need for a New Left is much greater now than it was then. The proliferation, stockpiling and technological development of nuclear weapons has increased alarmingly; the international ecological crisis threatens to engulf both East and West; and, of course, capitalism has again shown itself to be riven by insoluble contradictions, socio-political as well as economic. Moreover, in terms of organisational agencies of change, social democracy in general and the Labour Party in particular are now thoroughly, and perhaps irrevocably, discredited.

The growth of the 'Green Parties' in Western Europe (and of the Ecology and ANC movements in the UK) are perhaps portents of the creation of a new and more viable New Left, committed to socialist humanism but having also direct single issue concerns which could unite a wide range of organisations and individuals.

The potential for such movements is there: is it not time for those who have been involved in the various Left movements since 1956 to come together to forge a more permanent and more effective alliance with the new forces emerging to confront the irrationalities of capitalism in the Eighties?

Ellerslie, St Andrew's Avenue, Morley, Leeds 27

From Peter Cadogan

Edward Thompson's 'An Alternative to Doomsday' has the makings of a log-jam breaker and reminds me of his *New Reasoner* of 1956/7 and the fertile consequences that had for the decade of protest that followed. May I, as another dissident of '56, take up the case?

Rejecting the present American proposal to make Western Europe and Britain in particular an expendable front line in US military strategy, and inventing a wholly new concept for the future security of Europe East and West alike, will require an organised movement of public opinion dwarfing that of the Sixties. The immediate problem is where to begin and how to proceed. Do we start from scratch or from some existing movement?

CND was built on the left wing of the Labour Party. This meant initial strength and ultimate weakness. The Committee of 100 was made up of a strange mixture of those moved by Bertrand Russell's charisma (aided at the critical moment by the NEW STATESMAN), pacifists, left-wing dissenters without party allegiance and anarchists – all coming together in the very special circumstancs of 1961 when everything seemed to be happening at once. Today it is clear that the terms and constituencies of 1961 have departed for ever. Today's Left consists of a complex of internecine factions fighting to inherit the mantle of a moribund Communist Party. There is no proper basis for genuine movement in that quarter.

There are two other foundations at hand. The Left has largely ignored the organised peace movement since 1968 and it has been sustained mostly by its religious wing – Quakers, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship *et al*. Liaison is effectively established by the National Peace Council. It is a network with considerable possibilities, combining the old and the new as manifest in the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, the East-West Peace People, a reviving CND and the Young Liberals. There is a well established complex of full-time and part-time officers and offices with extensive international connections.

The other possible foundation may be even more promising. Throughout the western world over the last few years a very substantial movement of organised opinion has mobilised itself against the building of nuclear power stations. Is there a legitimate moral and political connection between Cruise missiles, SS-20s and nuclear power? If there is, then one campaign is the natural ally and resource of the other. There are, further, all sorts of significant phenonoma on the 'alternative' non-party side of things that bear thinking about. What if the women's lib movement was to decide that these same Cruise missiles and SS-20s were gross expressions of male chauvinism? And are people aware that the pop scene now has a political dimension? What if the Punks and even the Skins were to decide that war was not for them, especially if Mrs Thatcher tried to conscript them?

We are at the beginning of something very big indeed. The catalyst of the next great movement may be the missiles, it may be some new insanity perpetrated by Moscow or Washington, it may be Rhodesia turned into a bottomless pit by the Divine Right of the Whites – soon we shall know. What I hope we shall not allow, however, is the creation of something that turns out to be somebody's front. Edward Thompson's article sounded the authentic independent note. I trust we shall sustain it.

1 Hampstead Hill Gardens, London NW3

Ordinary prince

From Wilfred Beckerman

Christopher Hitchens's article on Prince Charles (NS 21/28 December) seems to be devoted to establishing that the Prince is 'short on intelligence, imagination or charm'. Whether or not this is true I don't know. The fact that he admires Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* proves nothing, since I know many highly intelligent laymen who have been taken in by this muddled nonsense. But if your description of Prince Charles is accurate it applies just as much to the vast majority of the people in this world who, as Kant pointed out, are no less entitled to equality of respect if not of praise. Presumably Mr Hitchens does not believe that Prince Charles was – to adapt a phrase of Harold Laski's – careless in the choice of his genes just because he was also born to be a king.

In any case, the main point is that it ill becomes a journal that loudly proclaims its tender concern for the ordinary man to show such contempt for what makes him ordinary. I suspect that Mr Hitchens is simply revealing the fact that, like several other left-wing intellectuals or pseudo-intellectuals, his concern for the common man is really only skin-deep.

12 Chadlington Road, Oxford

Cleaning up

From Ted Allbeury

A splendid piece by David Benedictus on censorship (NS 21/28 December). But his heartcry on behalf of the poor wretched retailers whose porn magazines are snatched by the police and returned after their court case has failed, I find disturbing. He says that when they are returned they are out of date and unsaleable. Has he researched this thoroughly?

Cheriton House, Furnace Lane, Lamberhurst, Kent

From Ian Flintoff

It is clear that David Benedictus enjoys squalor-in-art for its own sake when he can write: 'When we come to radio the position is bleak. Bad language and abuse they never never use. . .'

13 Cornwall Crescent, London W11

Time warp

From I. Tazartes

Better late than never. John Bayley (NS 19 October) regrets the lack of correspondence between Proust (1871-1922) and Sainte-Beuve (1804-1869). Over minus two years or so?

Chalkidonos 61, Athens 609

Decency

From George Cowley

How *sweet* of *dear* James Young from Crawley Down (such a *lovely* part of Sussex) to hope that the NS will one day print something *nice* about someone (NS 7 December). Thank God that such people as Mr Young still exist in this mundane world of cancer, strikes and nuclear missiles. I shall feel happy for at least 10 minutes.

Perryfields Hostel, Midland Road, Worcester

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Serpent's teeth

My father had a theory, not solidly based on any actual motoring experience on the road, that cars ran much better at night-time than by day. Returning from some outing and nearing home just as dusk was falling, he would listen appreciatively to the unchanging hum of the engine and say 'ah, it scents the evening air.' Whether this was a conscious but altered quotation from that sad spectre, the ghost of Hamlet's father and his 'But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air; Brief let me be', I do not know and it was certainly not the kind of question that one would have put to him. A counter-question would have resulted ('Why do you ask?'). I merely used to wonder if, in the unlikely and unwelcome event of a drive with my father right through the night, he would, when dawn came up, notice a sudden roughness in the engine's running.

From the 1920s on, the car we had was invariably a Morris (and during affluent years there were two), beginning with a bull-nosed Morris Cowley complete with hideously exposed and uncomfortable dickey seat, and progressing (wasn't there once a brand with a chassis rather daringly called a 'chummy body'?) through various models to a sedate Morris Oxford which had beige curtains to the windows, was painted a depressing dark brown and always seemed to me to be indistinguishable from a hearse. One felt one should be lying flat, embowered in blooms and deafened by sobs. But whatever sort we currently had, they were all alleged keenly to enjoy travel by night. As to the 'Brief let me be', this was never part of my father's creed. If a thing was worth saying, it was therefore worth saying at considerable length. Fortunately for him, he was quite unaware of both boredom and ruffled feathers in others ('Why did Miss Manning leave so early?').

For all trips by car we departed a full hour before we need, in case of accidents and unforeseen delays. There might, one never knew, be a puncture There might be a nosebleed requiring prostration and a cold key down the back. We might be witnesses of some exciting happening (murder, rape, robbery, regicide) and the police would need our names and lively recollections. Somebody might faint, and there was always a flask of brandy and some smelling-salts on board. Both of these emergency kit items led in their day, as did so many of the would-be kindly acts performed by my father, to misunderstandings and angry red faces and umbrage. We were once passing a pub and, seeing a man propped up, seated, against a wall with his eyes shut, my father instantly assumed that he had fainted. He leapt from the car, rushed forward with the smelling-salts and thrust them up the man's nose. But it was only a tipsy local who had been enjoying a quiet nap and who was understandably furious at being thus interfered with and so sharply recalled from the Land of Nod. My father had to make a somewhat hasty return to the car, pursued by a volley of exciting oaths which I did not at the time understand, and questions only produced 'Hush, dear'.

And another time, near Aldershot, we saw a trooper being unseated from his prancing horse, and, falling to the ground, lying motionless and as though dead. My father darted out with the flask and poured brandy down the man's throat (loud splutterings), only to be turned on by a wrathful officer who came galloping up. The trooper, he shouted, might have choked: he might have severe internal injuries for which brandy could be lethal, etc etc. It took quite a lot to abash my father but the officer, accustomed by his profession to dispense abuse where needed, succeeded splendidly and my father, in a cricketing term, retired hurt ('I only wanted to help'). To lighten the occasion, my mother, a great soother and a calm presence during many of Life's turbulences, produced some patum peperium sandwiches, that delicious salty and fishy substance that is also known as Gentleman's Relish (can the trade name now have been changed to Gentleperson's Relish?) and quite soon we all cheered up. Tomato soup and halibut (taken separately, I hasten to say) had also been known in their time to soothe my father when soothing was required at home, though at home it tended to be our visitors who needed the soothing.

There are, sadly, two things in life that can never be taught. One is 'timing' in acting, especially comedy. The other is tact. They are instinctive matters and are either present or not. The absence of tact in one or both parents was a subject that I frequently discussed in youth with my friend, Williamson, at our prep school on the Hampshire coast. Williamson was, if I may just remind you, the boy with whom I discovered the facts of life, more or less, with the aid of some striking wall drawings in the gentlemen's retiring-room of a rather scruffy and open air service rifle-range (much used in the first world war) and which lay within Sunday walking distance of our school. A few minor details were, I see now, missing but the drawings gave us the general spirit of the thing and indicated what to aim at in due course. The need constantly to refresh our memories and examine any fresh pictures made Sunday afternoons busier than ever. There was much to be done. Sunday letters home to dash off and cheer our loved ones ('Willoughby was sick in church'). Potatoes to be collected, sometimes with the cook's permission, from the kitchen (we used, permanently hungry, to make wood fires and bake them in the ashes). Then a quick look at Williamson's signed photograph of Dorothy Dickson and a discussion, fed on gossipy sections of the weekly *Sketch* and *Bystander*, as to how she might be spending her Sunday (brunch at Bray with Gerald du Maurier, we often assumed). Then a peppermint-cream or perhaps a pear-drop, after which it was heigh-ho for the range, two miles away but, like so many items in Baedeker, worth *le détour*.

Boys in the two top forms were allowed on Sundays to wander abroad at will, provided that they went in twos, and at the range we lit, after a peep or two at the sensational graffiti, our twig fire and baked the potatoes. On the way back we used to call at a small shop, obligingly open on Sundays, which sold cigarettes and were usually able to persuade the proprietor to ferret about in the unsold packets in search of cigarette cards (Wildflowers of Britain. Characters of Dickens) that we needed for our sets. And so, exhausted, to tea (bread, margarine, jam and a bubbling urn, the ensemble presided over by Matron), followed by another peppermint-cream and a further glance at Dorothy Dickson (by now, we supposed, sipping champagne and having supper with Jack Buchanan).

We always referred, for some reason, to our parents as 'people'. 'My people are coming down on Saturday' one would say in an elaborately offhand manner, praying that one's mother's hat would not cause comment or that one's father would not be too ebullient with the headmaster ('How's the young man coming along?'). Williamson too had his worries – a charming but over-emotional mother who was given to embracing him publicly rather more often than we considered needful, and a delightfully round and bouncey dad permanently a-chuckle whom Williamson found bothersome but whom I thought, disloyally, to be the nicest kind of father. Did either Williamson or myself ever feel a spark of gratitude for the fact that we were being relatively expensively educated and, provided we worked reasonably hard, led a completely trouble-free life? No we did not. Did we ever pause to consider, as one passed slum dwellings in London and other towns, what our unhappy lot as children might have been? No we did not. Williamson, having an altogether nicer character than I, never actually criticised his parents but I, odious and fault-finding and whining, droned ceaselessly on about my father's border-line imperfections and the agitating nature of some features of my home life. One took food, houses, pleasures, clothes, warmth, holidays, cars, books, toys and even, I am very sorry to say, love as being merely one's right. I cannot imagine why my parents didn't, at least twice a day, take my horrid little head and bang it violently against the nearest wall.

Roger Woddis

The Monetarist Samaritan

'No one would have remembered the Good Samaritan if he only had good intentions. He had money as well.' – Mrs Thatcher, interviewed in Weekend World.

And a man going down to Jericho
Fell among thieves one day,
Who laughingly did him over,
And laughingly rode away.

And a holy priest and a Levite
Passed by on the other side,
Until there came a Samaritan,
Hard-headed and narrow-eyed:

Who said, 'I shall only assist thee,
And pour on the oil and the wine,
If thou suffered these wounds while working.
And not on the picket-line.'

And he told the man in his mercy
To stand on his own two feet,
And he counted out two denarii,
And asked for a stamped receipt.

And the poor man told the Samaritan,
'Put thy money back in thy purse:
Being robbed is a bad enough fortune,
Being preached at is even worse.'

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Adrian Lyttelton

Socialism of the Will

Letters from Prison by ANTONIO GRAMSCI edited & translated by Lynne Lawner *Quartet* £3.95

Antonio Gramsci: Conservative Schooling for Radical Politics by HAROLD ENTWISTLE *Routledge* £7.95 & £3.95

Antonio Gramsci and the Party: the Prison Years by PAOLO SPRIANO translated by John Fraser *Lawrence & Wishart* £6.95

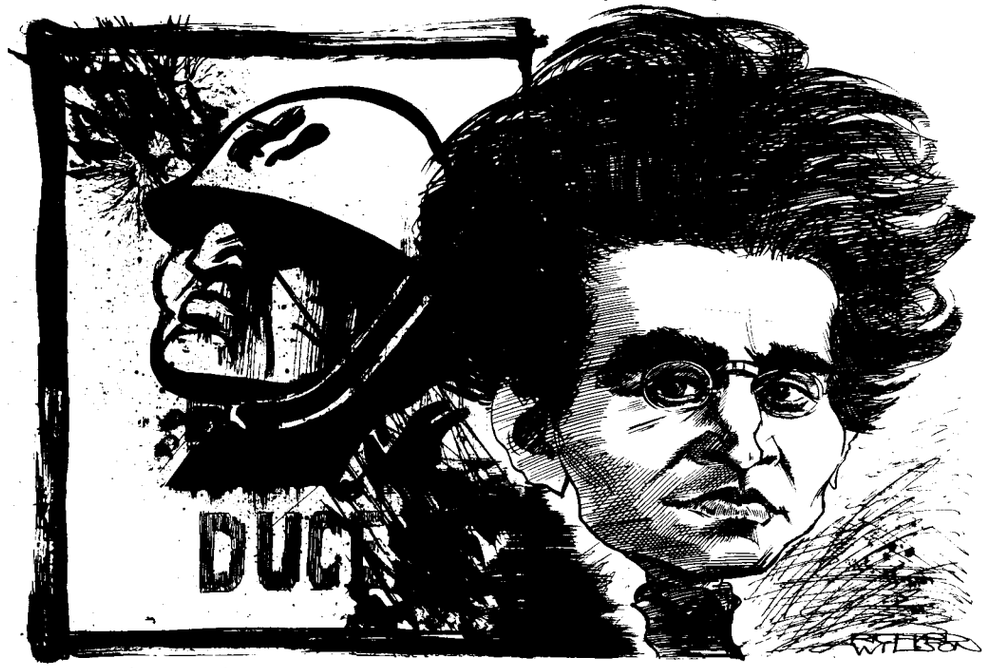
On Gramsci and Other Writings by PALMIRO TOGLIATTI edited by Donald Sassoon *Lawrence & Wishart* £9.50

Gramsci & Marxist Theory edited by Chantal Mouffe *Routledge* £9.50 & £5.95

In prison, Gramsci recalled that when he was a child, 'We hammered our fingers with stones until a drop of blood came out at the tips.' The image suggests, as he meant it to, his unflinching austerity in the face of suffering. Imprisonment bore particularly hard on Gramsci not only because of his physical disabilities but because it returned him to an isolation of which he had had all too much experience as a child and young man. Trust did not come easily to him, and he was almost as severe on those he loved as he was on himself. The *Letters from Prison* are a moving and tragic document of a man's refusal to give in, even when he knew that his powers of resistance were failing. Gramsci succeeded in converting the restrictions of prison life into intellectual stimuli, as when he was led by the shortcomings of his prison library to reflections on the significance of popular novels. Yet he regarded purely intellectual pursuits as a poor substitute for the synthesis of theory and action he had tried for in the outside world.

Gramsci had no illusions about spontaneity or the uncorrupted virtue of the people. A hunchback, raised in the peculiarly harsh society of Sardinia, he knew that peasants could be ignorant and cruel. Gramsci's was a socialism of the will: 'the environment', he wrote, 'does not justify anything'. As Professor Entwistle shows in his study of Gramsci's views on education, in prison he hardened his opposition to Rousseau and all progressive theorists of education who argued that the teacher has merely to develop the child's innate aptitudes. 'Man is an entirely historical formation obtained through coercion.' Yet this bleak view, derived from meditation on the past of Sardinia in particular, is not the whole story. Gramsci was much less of a rootless intellectual than, say, Mussolini: his letters show that he had kept a vivid memory of his childhood and a keen curiosity about the natural world. Lynne Lawner's selection includes some touching letters to his son, in which he recaptures the half-fabulous vision of his childhood. In Sardinia, every child knew what a basilisk looked like, and only schoolmasters insisted that they were mythical. For all his realism about the deficiencies of popular culture, Gramsci had not forgotten that basilisks might be real.

The Italian Communist party appreciated the value of Gramsci as an exemplary martyr. The true story of how medical negligence and bureaucratic obstructionism had allowed Gramsci's health to deteriorate to the point of no return was discreditable enough for Fascism. However, Togliatti still felt the need to give out a version of his death which suggested that he might have been deliberately murdered, a version quite at variance with the facts as reported by those near to Gramsci. This was just one of the distortions – and not the most serious – in the creation of the Gramsci legend. It is impossible to say what Gramsci would have done if he had stayed out of prison. Would he too, like Togliatti, have sacrificed truth and conviction to the need to preserve the party from a radical purge?



One can say only that Gramsci had a habit of mind which did not easily permit dishonesty. Since the publication of Fiori's *Life* it has been well known that Gramsci's time in prison was made more difficult and solitary by his disagreements with the party line. In 1929-30 he refused to subscribe to the new Stalinist diagnosis of immediate revolution and the fascist nature of social democracy. For a time, he was under suspicion and virtually ostracised by his comrades in prison.

Paolo Spriano, the author of the serious and scholarly official history of the Communist party, has now written a short book to put the facts about Gramsci's imprisonment straight. He is able to dispose of one or two conspiracy theories, such as the idea that Gramsci's arrest was deliberately engineered by the Comintern. Where, however, the book lapses into apologetics is in its treatment of the aftermath of Gramsci's death. Gramsci, whose views had been an embarrassment to the party in 1929-32, was happily rediscovered in 1935, when the Popular Front strategy was launched. At the time of his death in 1937 his orthodoxy was once more accepted. Unfortunately, a former comrade of his, Angelo Tasca, now published the letter written by Gramsci to Togliatti in Moscow shortly before his arrest in 1926. In this letter, which Togliatti had suppressed, Gramsci had criticised the measures taken by Stalin against the opposition in the Russian party. At this point, his respectability once again became dubious, at least in Russian eyes.

The *Prison Notebooks* and his other political writings remained unpublished for ten years. When the *Letters* were published, in 1947, all references to Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, or the first leader of the Italian party, Amadeo Bordiga, were carefully expunged. In the commemorative article that Togliatti published on Gramsci in the summer of 1937 he quoted him as calling Trotsky 'the whore of Fascism' and implied that he had learnt Russian in prison in order to read Lenin and *Stalin* in the original. Actually, Gramsci read little of Stalin's writings in any language. Spriano comments on this that these 'offhand remarks' by Togliatti are to be explained by the fact that he was 'perhaps convinced' that it was necessary to line up Gramsci with the Stalin cult, but that it is, of course, hard to separate 'cynicism from good faith'. It is astonishing that Spriano should describe the article as 'notwithstanding these defects . . . the most legitimate interpretive model of Gramsci the politician'. To admit that Togliatti traduced Gramsci on this occasion would be to break the magic thread of party tradition.

The Italian Communist party has distinguished itself from other Communist parties by the flexibility of its strategy and its openness to new ideas. Unfortunately, the other side of its readiness to innovate has been a mania for continuity. There is still a tendency to smooth over abrupt transitions in the party's history and to omit or minimise the impact of Stalinism. Donald Sassoon's otherwise useful anthology of Togliatti's major speeches and writings in part exemplifies this tendency. The dates of the texts he chooses are 1925, 1944, and then from 1954 onwards. The years of Togliatti's adaptation to Stalinism are omitted, although the problem is mentioned in the introduction; if the

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intention were not to present a selection representative of all phases of Togliatti's career, it would have been better to limit the scope of the anthology to the last period of his leadership, when he developed the theory of 'polycentrism'.

One of the most interesting articles in Chantal Mouffe's collection of essays on Gramsci's Marxism, by Massimo Salvadori, deals with the question of continuity. Can Gramsci really be presented as the intellectual ancestor of the 'historic compromise'? This is not just an academic debate, since it involves the key question of the party's interpretation of the 'democratic pluralism' to which it now subscribes. Salvadori argues powerfully that the presentation of a democratic Gramsci is mistaken and that his conception remained in essence Leninist. Marxism was for Gramsci an entirely self-sufficient philosophy, the basis of a 'total integral civilisation', radically opposed to all existing philosophies and religions. Ultimately, it was destined to absorb all other world-views, and Gramsci's insistence on the need for the party to secure ideological hegemony by persuasion during the 'transitional' phase did not imply any repudiation of the legitimacy of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Chantal Mouffe insists against Salvadori that Gramsci did believe in pluralism, but 'certainly not a liberal pluralism for which all elements exist at the same level, democracy resulting from their free concurrence (sic)'.

But this really proves Salvadori's point: either the Italian Communist party is committed to *this* conception of pluralism, or it is not committed to anything at all. This doesn't mean that the Gramscian heritage is irrelevant to a new democratic strategy; one could argue that the latter is a logical deduction from Gramsci's premises, given the change in historical circumstances. It is certainly entirely appropriate that the debate on Gramsci should be at the centre of the discussion between Communists and Socialists in Italy. For perhaps Gramsci's major achievement as a theorist was that he restored ideological debate to full dignity as a form of political action.

A brilliant essay by the political philosopher Norberto Bobbio in the Mouffe volume points out that in Gramsci's theory ideologies become the prime movers of history. Bobbio's essay has been challenged by other scholars as over-emphasising the importance attached by Gramsci to cultural preparation as distinct from other forms of political action, but it has the great merit of bringing out clearly the truly original features of Gramsci's approach. In lesser measure, this is true of some of the other essays in Mouffe's volume, which represents fairly the various tendencies of present Gramsci criticism in Italy and France. It forms a useful introduction to Gramsci's thought, although it is a pity that the language of some of the contributions is almost impenetrable. Gramsci troubled to make himself understood; his interpreters often obscure him.

Duncan Campbell

As Free as the Police

The Queen's Peace: the origins and development of the Metropolitan Police, 1829-1979 by DAVID ASCOLI *Hamish Hamilton* £9.95

After the Riots: The Police in Europe by NORMAN FOWLER *Davis-Poynter* £7

Policing the Inner City: A Study of Amsterdam's Warmoesstraat by MAURICE PUNCH *Macmillan* £12

Policing Freedom by JOHN ALDERSON *MacDonald & Evans* £7.50

Crime and Police in England 1700-1900 by J. J. TOBIAS *Gill & Macmillan* £10

Review of Security and the State, 1979 compiled by State Research *Julian Friedmann* £10

It is healthy and helpful to see so much study of the critical issue of liberty and policing in democracies. Some of these authors, unhappily, have little of contemporary relevance to elicit from their studies. David Ascoli's presentation of the first 150 years of the Metropolitan Police contains the jammy gloss over contentious issues expected of speeches at a school prizegiving.

Here, one supposes, was a golden opportunity for prising open some of Scotland Yard's stickier doors in order to write an authoritative history. Ascoli claims the advantage of widespread contacts throughout the Force, and access to 'internal papers'. Yet what he produces does not add at all to major studies already in existence: Critchley's definitive *History*; or Cox, Shirley and Short's account of recent corruption, *The Fall of Scotland Yard*; or even the well-worn story of Sir Robert Mark's first few embattled years at the Yard. Ascoli is 'not an investigative journalist', 'make(s) no claim to be a professional historian'. This shows.

Curiously, there were to have been two accounts to mark the 150th anniversary, the other, more promising, coming from Heron House. It appears to have been abandoned before completing the course.

Almost a quarter of Ascoli's tale deals with the years before the Met was established. He justifies at length the introduction of the 'New Police' (the term 'police' was then most familiar from Bonaparte's dictatorship) in the face of widespread concern for liberty. Neither this concern nor arguments about the democratic accountability of the police are allowed to appear as legitimate in any more modern times.

Little more than a further quarter of the book deals with the postwar world, and that section barely does more than recount the major law-and-order news stories of the last 30 years – plus giving an obsessive and detailed account of Life at the Top in Scotland Yard, a full chronicle of the dance steps of Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Assistant Commissioners *et al* as they move from job to job. The present Commissioner, Sir David McNee, obviously thinks this approach attractive, although the best measure of his wee-mindedness is to be found in his foreword where he bemoans the lack of a concluding chapter on the (no doubt beneficent) role of Scotsmen in the Metropolitan Police.

Mr Ascoli's own appreciation of, or sensitivity to, contemporary issues is quite clear from his short and histrionic summary of the postwar years 'Change and Decay'. He laments the 'destruction of the greatest empire of modern times', the 'immigrant tidal wave', the '"compassionate fools" [who allowed] the liberalisation of abortion and homosexuality', 'militant trade unionists' and – finally – the fact that, during a 16-month period in London, 71 children under 12 years old were arrested for taking cars and driving them away. It seems fitting that he and an equally reactionary and anti-intellectual Metropolitan Police Commissioner should spend their forewords battling over McNee's desire for a '*pibroch* on every page'.

A Conservative politician with an eye on the Home Office front bench (presently the Minister of Transport), Norman Fowler, has written a much more moderate, interesting and up-to-date book on policing, *After the Riots*. He examines the major police forces of western Europe, and their responses to political stresses from the Weimar Republic and the Nazi occupation to the Paris uprising of 1968 and the Dutch *Provos*.

It is an intelligent and liberal account surveying first the police forces themselves and then the more contentious modern issues which all face: organised crime and terrorism, complaints, moral issues like drugs and pornography, even to some extent, traffic policing. On all these issues, Fowler's reporting is pleasingly readable and balanced. But the author's careful balance produces an inability to advocate particular points of view or reach unequivocal conclusions on any topic.

That leaves his purpose in writing the book in some doubt: is it a series of features for *The Times*, a policy study to which policy conclusions dare not be joined by a 'leading Conservative politician'; a reader in comparative policing for students of the subject at large: which?

A politician of the present *régime* who calls for a public demonstration of 'effective checks on the abuse of power' and 'accountability to elected assemblies and the law' is certainly a welcome addition to the Government benches – if he means what he says. It is not clear, nevertheless, that Mr Fowler appreciates the current difficulty of bringing any British police chief to account for the operations of his force before any elected assembly, whether local or at Westminster. Increasing erosion of answerability of police forces to local authorities seems to have accompanied the increasing ability of minority and underprivileged classes to be represented in these assemblies through enfranchisement. It is well nigh time to turn that tide.

Just one section of one of these police forces – the Dutch – comes under the critical scrutiny of Dr Maurice Punch in what is undoubtedly the most fascinating and interesting of this selection of books. Punch spent months participating in and observing the work of the police in an inner city district of Amsterdam – the Warmoesstraat red light district, an area of high crime and predictably complicated social problems and stresses. He reports not in the customary jargon of the sociological trade, but in an open narrative characterised by frequent, lengthy and honest

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observations from the policemen themselves. Scholarliness is not lost in this style, a remarkable feat.

Over the course of two years, Punch – in fact a Briton – studied the police, their attitudes and work, at the major inner city police station. He records their virtually total detachment from a community which had largely become the province of outsiders. London, one imagines, would hardly be very different, and the picture Punch paints is instructive and revealing; the sources and consequences of police bitterness and confusion about their role are well drawn, frequently in the words of his police interviewees. In London or indeed elsewhere in Britain, similar research by independent academics has always been vetoed by the secretive watchdogs in the Home Office. A major reason for the move to Amsterdam was that the Dutch police had sufficient independence to allow an outsider to work with them and scrutinise everything they did.

Policing the Inner City is sociology as adventure; Punch is out on the streets most of the time, punctuating his observations with detailed and often exciting excerpts from interviews and field notes. He recounts that his early belief in the possibility of detachment from what he was observing was soon eroded. He and his companions became 'colleagues'; he frequently ended up behaving as a policeman himself, assisting in searches and arrests, but fortuitously escaping any more serious complications of his dual role.

Despite this non-detachment, the account is wholly authentic. Misjudgment, police violence, racialism and other biases are scrupulously observed and reported. Thus too the demoralisation of the police: an inability to take a preventative role towards major and minor crime meant that they worked in two different ways; as a 'fire brigade' in response to particular incidents, and secondly in repressive action against 'conspicuous deviant groups in the district'.

The social volatility of the districts being policed, and ambivalence in the civil administration had led to increasingly ineffective policing, and 'repressive norms' of law enforcement. Denied the opportunity to be part of the community, the police took these easy ways out.

Another view from the inside is John Alderson's. Now a Chief Constable, Alderson was previously at the Yard and also Commandant of the Police Staff College at Bramshill. One suspects that the staccato rate at which Alderson shoves through topic after topic (30 chapters in 200 pages or so) has its cause in the origin of the book as lecture-course notes, to which he has added a motley selection of documents he has written at one time or another. It is valuable to see what teachings Alderson, a widely quoted liberal police spokesman, has on the contemporary topics as examined above.

Sadly, his views are generally superficial, with occasional and equally superficial tilts in the direction of sociology. We cannot derive much real meaning from his visions of a 'New Model Police Force' which will 'contribute towards liberty, equality and fraternity in human affairs', or 'work to dispel crimogenic social conditions' unless a deeper analysis of conflicts and their causes in society is also to be found. Alderson offers no such analysis. He regards law and a properly behaved police force as a 'neutral' instrument in political and social affairs. He ought to know better.

Alderson has also experimented with ways of involving communities more closely in the work of the police, and has carried out serious experiments, which have been manipulative rather than co-operative; the police present the crime 'problem' and community members and groups have then to help 'solve' it. They are not offered a say in the definition of the problem, or in the allocation of police resources. That might be a step to genuine democracy in control of the police.

The account of Alderson's tinkerings with conventional ideas makes interesting reading; the rest is valuable as a record of what a top cop teaches the new recruits.

J. J. Tobias is also a one-time Bramshill lecturer, whose modest history of two centuries of early policing and punishment is a reminder that certain traditions were not always as they are popularly believed to have been. Effective policing took place well before Sir Robert Peel set up the Met, through watchmen and parish constables; the standard was naturally very variable. Another interesting observation is that early magistrates in Britain were also investigators like the contemporary French *Juges d'instruction*; the present system came along with later police reforms.

Only State Research's implied critique of the state and its organs has any radical prescription to promote, although the two studies of European police forces should open some eyes. The work of State Research – reporting on the police and military, repressive law, internal security and espionage – fills a void somewhere between radical militancy and liberalism, and aims to satisfy both constituencies. Their reporting of developments in these areas eschews bland liberal assumptions about incorruptibility and accountability made elsewhere. They have grown up over the last two years as part of a lobby which has succeeded in bringing considerable attention to bear on the repressive and menacing aspects of organisations like the Special Branch, the Special Patrol Groups and their like. The continued scrutiny of State Research – a watchdog lobby of a type more familiar in Washington than in London – is a valuable bolster to our deficient democracy.

Their view at least offers new models and new ideas. Historical accounts make much of the original development of policing as an arm of the community rather than as an arm of the state, but offer no route back to this model. Those within the service naturally prefer to run large and powerful forces and deal with like-thinking civil servants, and not the irritations of small communities or state researchers. Those without too often merely observe the development of the police arm of the state, identify its problems for both state and civil liberty but offer no further development. Some prescriptions along these lines would be welcome as an ultimate goal, beyond tinkering with accountability and powers, as we do at present. We are only as free as the police outside will let us be. How do we bring them in, and under democratic control?

Next week: Edward W. Said on Stansky and Abrahams' *Orwell*; Jonathan Mirsky on books on China; A. S. Byatt on recent literary criticism; J. L. Gili on Lorca.

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Rosemary Ashton

Gouty Masterpiece

Wilhelm Meister's Years of Apprenticeship by JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE translated by H. M. Waidson, 3 vols *Calder/Riverrun Press, New York* £5.95 per vol.

A new translation of *Wilhelm Meister* must be most welcome. Carlyle's celebrated translation of 1824 has long been out of print, and the book which is, according to Thomas Mann, 'the greatest of German novels', is not well known in England. The appearance of Professor Waidson's translation raises certain questions: *is* it a great novel? and is it translatable? Auden, in the preface to his and Elizabeth Mayer's translation of Goethe's *Italian Journey* (1962), reminded us from *Finnegan's Wake* that Daunty, Gouty, and Shopkeeper are the three great names in European literature, adding that the second is merely a name to English readers because Goethe is peculiarly resistant to translation. I think Auden was right, and nowhere, except in his lyric poems, is Goethe more difficult to render than in *Wilhelm Meister*.

But to take the first question first: wherein lies the greatness of this work? All Goethe's best critics – Schiller, Friedrich Schlegel, Carlyle – felt they must explain and defend its apparent carelessness, tediousness, and immorality. Here is a novel in which for long periods nothing 'happens'. There are several unfinished discussions, of uncertain critical merit, about life and art, particularly about the theatre, and more particularly about *Hamlet*. The hero, a 'milksop' (Carlyle) or 'poor dog' (Goethe himself), imagining he has a vocation for the theatre, gets involved with a group of travelling actors when he should be doing business deals for his father; is much disillusioned by the pettiness and lack of proper artistic enthusiasm among his fellows; falls into various love affairs; meets several enigmatic figures who seem to retard his artistic (and moral) progress but turn out later to belong to a mysterious Society which has been guiding him all along towards maturity.

Few modern readers would be offended, as most 19th-century critics were, by the sexual freedom which Goethe depicts without disapproval. But they might be even more liable than their predecessors to charge the book with tediousness. Goethe takes risks with his reader's willingness to persevere: right at the beginning he allows the callow but pompous Wilhelm to bore his mistress to sleep with a dull account of his childhood love of puppet-theatre. As Coleridge said, the problem with boring characters in literature, with the possible exception of the drama, is that they bore. Moreover, if we expect pattern, plan, authorial authority in a novel, we find these expectations either disappointed or over-fulfilled. The narrator is careless, he may introduce characters without names, or throw doubt on a name ('he was called Jarno, but nobody rightly knew what to make of the name', Book Three, Chapter Four), or give an over-determined name (one actor, 'whom for the time being we will call Laertes', later acts Laertes to Wilhelm's Hamlet).

Characters cross Wilhelm's path and disappear after fleeting, ambiguous or unexplained meetings. All conversations in the first six books are interrupted or unfinished. The reader has no idea where his sympathies should lie; there is no foregrounding and backgrounding. Yet when we are about to complain of lack of direction, we find that in Books Seven and Eight, set in the headquarters of the Society, previously unfinished conversations are scrupulously completed, forgotten characters return and reveal connections with one another and with Wilhelm. Now we are inclined to complain that the novel is too highly patterned. But Goethe slips out of our grasp here too: the sententious guardians with their wise words about Life act as a kind of Providence leading Wilhelm to the right end, but they do so by the enlightened method of letting him make his mistakes anyway as he goes along. There is a note of high comedy amid the reverential atmosphere, so that in the end we find it impossible to say whether the novel is comic or serious, so double is the impression it leaves. In this doubleness, this moral and aesthetic inclusiveness, lies, I believe, the greatness of the work, but here too lie the greatest difficulties for a translator.

It is largely a question of narrative distance. Much of *Wilhelm Meister* is rendered in reported speech, which inevitably seems flat in English. In German this method requires, as a matter of grammar, the use of the subjunctive. As the subjunctive may also suggest doubt, hypocrisy, or illusion in the speaker, Goethe can build up an atmosphere of cumulative irony, never overtly directing our response to his characters. The best that a translator can do is to make frequent use of verbs of seeming and supposing. Here Professor Waidson does what he can to preserve the ambiguities. He is also quite good at conveying the flighty flirtatiousness of the actress Philine and the stiffness of the chief guardians. Yet too often he does not succeed with Goethe's sly humour. The sentence 'She therefore decided to take Jarno into her confidence, and she could do this all the more easily as her relationship with him was one where people usually are accustomed to withholding very little' (Book Three, Chapter Twelve) catches little of Goethe's deft sexual suggestiveness. Often the stylistic infelicities result less from Goethe's elusiveness than from Waidson's obvious desire to translate as closely as possible. Thus some sentences have an un-English ring: 'it is also difficult to explain it briefly in a definite manner' (Book Eight, Chapter Seven), 'we are being deceived in such a way so that we shall never get things straight' (Book Eight, Chapter Four). The poems in the text are notoriously difficult to translate. These Waidson renders accurately and in rhyme, though often by sacrificing scansion, arguably a more important element than rhyme.

This translation is, oddly enough, often less fluent and more stilted than Carlyle's historically important one. Carlyle may have Carlylised Goethe, but his text does read like a work of literature, which Waidson's, for all its accuracy, does not. I think it a pity that he has provided only a brief, uninformative introduction of six pages. What is needed is some account of the difficulties encountered by a translator, an idea of the history of the reception of *Wilhelm Meister*, especially in England, where Carlyle, George Eliot, and Henry James made interesting critical comments, and due attention to Carlyle's translation (not mentioned anywhere by Waidson). Carlyle knew his readers would find *Wilhelm Meister* strange and wrote an intelligent introduction to help them make sense of it. Professor Waidson misses the opportunity to do the same for us. I doubt if many will persevere long without a helpful introduction and a lively rendering of the text, particularly as this translation, in three hardback volumes, costs £17.85. It seems to me a strange way of making a foreign classic available in English. There is still room for a translation of *Wilhelm Meister*, or even for a modern reprint of Carlyle's; one hopes that one will be forthcoming, with a good introduction, and in paperback. Otherwise one of the greatest of German novels will remain as disregarded as it has been since Carlyle's translation went out of print.

Vicki Feaver

Away from home

What lies beyond the line
of swaying trees, or makes
that odd red flush in the sky,
I don't want to know. For tonight
it's enough: stones underfoot,
patterns of light in the dark.

The girl, walking beside me
down the path, her dogs
pushing against my legs, says
it's depressing here in winter.
And I believe her. Nothing
could stay like this –

not a place, not people.
A moment ago our words
rushing like water to a river –
how easy it is talking to strangers
when nothing's expected and even
silences can be laughed off.

When I come back
I must remember that.
We had the surface pickings too –
Words flew between us like birds.
It's winter now. But they'll return
pouring their songs into our silences.

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Hermione Lee

A Violent-Coloured Ray

Pilgrimage by DOROTHY RICHARDSON *Virago* 4 vols £3.50 each

> There is no drama, no situation, no set scene. Nothing happens. It is just life going on and on. It is Miriam's stream of consciousness going on and on.
>
> Miriam is aware of 'life itself'; of the atmosphere of the table rather than of the table; of the silence rather than of the sound . . . A man might fall dead at her feet (it is not likely), and Miriam might feel that a violent-coloured ray of light was an important element in her consciousness of the tragedy.
>
> The housewife who is bound and gagged by an armed robber furnishes a complete event: the victim confronts the aggressor, one is innocent and the other guilty . . . Meanwhile, other housewives are moseying about their houses, inconclusively. The first subject is meant for Truman Capote, the second for Dorothy Richardson. It was she who first subsisted upon the intricacies of the not remarkable.

The likeness between these comments, taken from Dorothy Richardson's three most perceptive critics, is striking. May Sinclair, in her 1918 article on the early volumes of *Pilgrimage,* Virginia Woolf, reviewing the seventh of the novels in 1923, and Mary Ellmann, in *Thinking about Women* (1968), all insist, by the antithesis they draw between 'happenings' and 'consciousness', on the interrelationship of subject-matter, method, and ideology in *Pilgrimage,* and on the demands it makes of the reader to view experience – and fiction – in a new way.

There is nothing 'new' about this now, of course. But when Richardson began to write *Pilgrimage* in 1913, at the age of 40, *Du Coté de Chez Swann* was only just published and not yet translated, and neither Virginia Woolf's first novel nor *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* had yet appeared. Richardson was the first of the English 'modernists', and it was in Sinclair's review of *Pilgrimage* that William James's term 'stream of consciousness' was first applied to fiction. But, as *Pilgrimage* progressed, 'the lonely track' (in Richardson's words) 'turned out to be a populous highway', and she found herself overtaken by greater talents. There was brief and limited acclaim for her in the Twenties, but in the Thirties, with *Pilgrimage* still uncompleted, she was already being referred to, if at all, as the most neglected of the modernists. John Cowper Powys, a devotee, poured scorn on the inability of 'clever philistines' to understand her; Ford Madox Ford described her 'complete world neglect' as 'an amazing phenomenon', and H. G. Wells, identifying himself as 'Hypo Wilson' in *Pilgrimage,* called it 'a very curious essay in Autobiography' still lacking 'general appreciation'. (His more private feelings about it were expressed in a letter to Rebecca West, written on a boring luxury liner: 'If I have much more of this bloody steamship I shall begin to write like Dorothy Richardson.')

In poverty, obscurity, and old age, Richardson went on writing her book: it stopped only with her death in 1957. A complete edition was published in 1967 with a respectful introduction by Walter Allen. By then her literary fate was sealed: she is dutifully referred to as an innovator, an 'early' feminist, and an influence on Virginia Woolf; and she is not read.

There are good reasons for this neglect as well as bad ones. *Pilgrimage is* far too long, even if part of its purpose is to undermine conventions about the length and shape of novels. Richardson herself marked 'I.R.' – Imperfectly Realised – above the many dull, flat passages. The precise, intense impressionism of the first four and best novels gets lost in the flaccid, florid style (unhappily influenced by James) of the later work. Miriam at 17, as a governess in a German school, is more luminously rendered than Miriam at 34 in a strange love scene with 'Hypo':

> A faint scent of camphor came from the Martins across the way, sitting in their cool creased black-and-white check cotton dresses. . . . As tea went on Miriam found her eyes drawn back and back again to these newly unpacked camphor-scented dresses . . . and when conversation broke after moments of stillness . . . shadowy foliage . . . the still hot garden . . . the sun-baked wooden room beyond the sunny *saal*, the light pouring through the three rooms and bright along the table . . . it was to the Martins' check dresses that she glanced.
>
> It was intensely hot, but the strain had gone out of the day; the feeling of just bearing up against the heat and getting through the day had gone; they all sat round . . . which was which? . . . Miriam met eye after eye – how beautiful they all were, looking out from faces and meeting hers – and her eyes came back unembarrassed to her cup, her solid butterbrot and the sunlit angle of the garden-wall and the bit of tree just over Fräulein Pfaff's shoulder.
>
> Reflected in the mirror she saw as if it were elsewhere and invisible, save by an effort of imagination she did not wish to make, the spectacle of him in conflict with garments and drew her eyes back to her own image just in time to see before it was shadowed by the influence of the haste that was needed if she were to be ready in time to escape the embarrassment of his misguided observation, how radiant it was in the promise of side-by-side companionship.

Gargantuanism and obfuscation are superficial problems. The more profound danger lies in what Virginia Woolf called 'the damned egotistical self'. Walter Allen develops this well: 'One is left feeling that the external world exists merely to provide so much fodder for the voracious sensibility of her character'. However interesting Miriam's impressions, however original the presentation of the world only as she experiences it, at times there's a sense of bias and constriction rather than of freedom. For example, the work doesn't seem to allow (as *Portrait* does) for the possibility of *disliking* Miriam. There's no ironic, distancing control – in the later novels 'she' increasingly becomes 'I'. And, while Miriam's working and thinking life is exhaustively rendered, her physical experiences are timidly presented, and some crucial facts – her mother's suicide, her miscarriage – are concealed beneath an evasive surface.

If censorship makes for unease, so too does Miriam's didacticism. 'They invent a legend to put the blame for the existence of humanity on a woman and, if she wants to stop it, they talk about the wonders of civilization and the sacred responsibilities of motherhood. They can't have it both ways. They also say women are not logical.' What Mary Ellmann nicely calls 'all that blithering about *men* . . . like motes in the light bright air of *Pilgrimage*' is interesting enough in its trail-blazing absolutism and in its relation to Virginia Woolf (particularly, I think, to *The Years* and *Three Guineas*). But the protests are lumpish, static, unassimilated into the movement of the novel.

What makes *Pilgrimage* more than a historical curiosity are its brilliant specificity, its

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retrospective immediacy (everything seems to be happening to Miriam *now*) and its courageous preoccupation with difficult aesthetic problems. Terms which can be slightly belittling – period piece, *roman à clef* – should be enthusiastically applied here. The schools in Hanover and North London (calling *Villette* to mind), the country house where Miriam is a governess and observes 'feminine worldliness', her boarding-house attic in Endsleigh Street (a less familiar side of Bloomsbury), the Wimpole Street dentist's where she worked for ten years, the seedy room in Woburn Buildings, with a view of Yeats across the street, writing by candlelight; the Swiss hotel and the Quaker farmhouse in Sussex where she goes to rest – all these settings, and London as a whole, are presented with an extraordinary evocative closeness. Miriam's dentist-boss tells her, 'You ought to document your period', and that in part is what *Pilgrimage* does. As an account of a young woman living alone in London at the turn of the century (when women cyclists, phonographs and telephones were as new as streams of consciousness), hearing Stopford Brooke, Daguerre and McTaggart lecture, going to Irving's *Merchant of Venice* and Fabian meetings, and resisting all invitations to 'the sheltered life', *Pilgrimage* is quite unrivalled.

It also provides a highly interesting fictional portrait of H. G. Wells, his second wife ('Alma') and his social circle. Richardson and Wells had a long friendship and a brief affair; her pregnancy by him miscarried. In *Pilgrimage* 'Hypo' is, after Miriam, the most dominant character. His masculine cleverness and opinionatedness, his 'unvarying false impressions' of people make him a prime target for hostilities; yet it's a perceptive study:

> The little man . . . met the laughter with a minatory outstretched forefinger, and raised his voice to a soft squeal ending, as he launched with a little throw of the hand his final jest, in a rotund crackle of high hysterical open-mouthed laughter.

That inwardness of detail is *Pilgrimage*'s most striking quality. Like Virginia Woolf, Richardson repeatedly laments the tyranny of words. 'Speech did something to things; set them in a mould that was apt to come up again; repeated, it would be dead; but perhaps one need never repeat oneself?' Conversations are 'false to life'; translating – which Richardson discusses absorbingly – 'made the phrases fall to pieces'; novels are 'an endless fuss about nothing'. The reality, life's infinite, slight, kaleidoscopic variations, can only be expressed in silence or music. Just as Miriam tries to 'voyage' in a state of negative capability – an almost impersonal openness to experience – so the novel attempts, through an infinite accumulation of detail, to make its words *become* – as near as words can – the very reality of the thing they describe. 'How shall I write it down, the *sound* the little boy made as he carefully carried the milkjug?' *Pilgrimage* is so long, and so flawed, and so impressive, because it is trying, and says that it is trying, to do the impossible.

Penelope Mortimer

Flesh as Grass

The View In Winter: Reflections on Old Age by RONALD BLYTHE *Allen Lane* £6.95

Since this book was published we have all not only grown three months older, but entered a new decade – that in itself is an ageing experience: by the end of it we shall have shunted on to another stop, another category. In January 1990 I shall be officially senescent, all my children will be middle-aged, three of my grandchildren will be adolescent and a newborn grandson, now wholly concerned with light and sound and tit, will have become an unimaginable 10-year-old.

If such a personal reaction to Ronald Blythe's reflections on old age seems out of place, I must argue that old age is a very personal thing and can only be approached by identifying, and from experience: it is not a 'condition', like gender or race or infancy. My mother died accidentally, at the age of 96: she was shovelling purloined manure on her roses, and disturbed an ancient hernia. Her younger sister, my aunt, has just celebrated her hundredth birthday. Small wonder that I have such a subjective attitude to something which, to me, is more of a prospect than a speculation. The estimated 16.6 per cent of the population who will be over 65 in 1982 will be composed of 9,500,000 individuals of many colours and both sexes, all with their own backlogs of memory, each one responding differently to the imminence of death. I cannot see them lumped together as a problem, a phenomenon, or even as a subject for literary reflection. I cannot accept (but ah, how foolish) that I shall ever be one of Mr Blythe's 'them', or ever think of my own generation as 'us', any more than I do now, or did when I was 24 or 39. I am as suspicious of generalisations about old age as I would be of an armchair-traveller's theories about a country in which I shall probably live for many years.

The View in Winter has received praise almost amounting to adulation – though when Dame Rebecca West was interviewed about it on television (chosen, presumably, not because she is one of the world's most accomplished writers, but because she is 'old') she was distinctly uncomfortable and noncommital. I am whole-heartedly glad for Mr Blythe's success, for he is nothing if not earnest, conscientious and deserving. But puzzled.

The gradualness of what Dr John Agate, the distinguished geriatrician, calls 'normal senescence' precludes any attempt to categorise the old. Very few people (except sometimes the very young) 'age overnight', and most of our superstitions about senility come from a time when a man was a Methuselah at 40 – the image of 'mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything' applies nowadays only to the very ill and hospitalised. 'Physicians,' wrote Francis Bacon, 'in the name of death, include all sorrow, anguish, disease, calamity, or whatsoever can fall in the life of man, either grievous or unwelcome: but these things are familiar unto us, and we suffer them every hour; therefore we die daily, and I am older since I affirmed it.' The medical profession, at least, has discovered the truth of this. Loss of eyesight, deafness, arthritis, sexual apathy, are not symptoms of normal ageing: the propensity to these things is there in the cradle, and the careless habits of youth and middle-age encourage them.

Mr Blythe, by the very fact of compiling this book, implies that he regards everyone over the age of 75 as odd in some way: different; often better than us, and in some ghoulish way *cute*. He does admit, in one of his unsubstantiated generalisations, that:

> Old age sometimes recovers the seriousness of youth which middle age lost or put aside because of its inconvenience

and one would have liked this pursued further, if he could have defined 'old age' and 'sometimes' and 'seriousness of youth', so that we would have known what he was talking about. But on the whole, life is seen as a process of disablement, which brings out a sort of cocky cheer, an indomitable triviality, in the sufferer. Out on a limb as usual, I found his pedagogic manner sentimental and patronising.

Mr Blythe has clearly done a great deal of mugging up on his subject: there is, in fact, very little, if anything, that cannot be found in the writings of Agate or any other geriatric specialist, including Shakespeare:

> *Lear*: When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?
> *Fool*: I have used it, Nuncle, e'er since thou mad'st thy daughters thy mothers; for when thou gav'st them the rod and putt'st down thine own breeches,
> Then they for sudden joy did weep,
> And I for sorrow sung,
> That such a king should play bo-peep,
> And go the fools among . . .

Mr Blythe quite properly remarks, with the experts, on this reversal of roles: it is a bewildering situation for the middle-aged when their parents attain (for in some ways I think it is a desirable state) second childhood and expect their children to feed them and read to them and tuck them up at nights. Hence the 'homes' that are not homes, the nurses and social workers who are not nannies, the guilty visiting days with cake and candy and news of remote relations. But none of the interviewees in *The View in Winter* have experienced this most common predicament. An 84-year-old District Nurse remembers the Twenties:

> And you'd get this peculiar thing where a son or a daughter couldn't do anything for them. Intimate, I mean. Father was father and mother was mother. You couldn't touch them. They sat about and stank.

But that isn't what Mr Blythe himself has been telling us. Nor does he actually talk to anyone in an Old People's Home, apart from a 50-year-old Matron. His own 'reflections' are all second-hand, supported by innumerable relevant and irrelevant quotations, but not by the old people he has selected as expositors. They just burble on, unconscious of the fact that they are geriatric specimens. Little of what they say is worth recording; it would be suspect if it were.

Apart from its sacrosant subject, the book has been mightily praised for its prose style. It is easier, perhaps, to give it the benefit of the doubt than to confess that much of it is almost unintelligible:

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There are no children's voices in these villages and no bells on Sunday, nothing but distant tractors driven by strangers and the ignoring aeroplanes. They are a new way of abandoning the rural old who are left stranded among distant beetfields in Domesday foundations which can no longer support village viability.

In other words . . .?

The metaphysical factor has entered Western consciousness and man as a beautiful animal stops admiring himself in the hard light of morning. He sees his flesh now as grass, green and running before the wind, then sere and falling before the blade. When the drying-up is accepted as being no more unnatural than the growing up, the pathetic note is sounded.

Akenfield was good enough to tide Mr Blythe's reputation over 11 years. It had all the merits which, to me *View in Winter* lacks: intimate knowledge of the subject, simplicity, lucidity and shape. It is only fair to repeat that I am in a very small minority in my disappointment over this new book. Put it down to the crabbiness of approaching senility. I may well in 20 years groan with recognition.

Andrew Motion

Burning Snow

The Echo Gate by MICHAEL LONGLEY *Secker* £3
Collected Poems 1942-1977 by W. S. GRAHAM *Faber* £8.50 & £3.95

'Strangely neglected' has been risible ever since Jim Dixon mocked his own attempt at a learned article. '"This strangely neglected topic" it began. "This what neglected topic? This strangely what topic? This strangely neglected what?"' Nevertheless, the words are applicable to Michael Longley and W. S. Graham – the former because he has commonly been placed in the shadow of Seamus Heaney and Derek Mahon, the latter because his poems – in recent years, at least – have been continuously and deliberately unfashionable. But now any such judgment, and its accompanying taint, will seem even less deserved. Longley's new collection is indisputably distinctive, and Graham's *Collected Poems 1942-1977* shows that his work has become more accessible as its originality has increased.

In the past, Longley's strong point has always been his lyricism – largely because he has never allowed elegance to inhibit plain-speaking. And the same is true of the best poems in *The Echo Gate*; 'Dead Men's Fingers', typically, reinforces amorous exultation by relating it to the phenomenal world with a kind of excited tenderness:

The second time we meet I am waiting in a pub
Beside the cigarette machine. She
is in her moons.
A cat with a mouse's tail dangling
out of its mouth
Flashes from between her legs and escapes
into my head.

Elsewhere the objects chosen to play a part in negotiations between spirit and flesh are more conventionally romantic – which invariably means rural. Hillsides, lakes, snow and wild flowers recur with particular frequency, and gather considerable symbolic value as the book proceeds. While this obviously enriches them in one respect, it also threatens their naturalism, and subverts the very function that Longley wishes them to perform. Rather than manifesting his commitment to the world around him they risk suggesting a withdrawal from it into artifice. 'Lore', 'Entomology' and 'Botany' look suspiciously like souvenirs from Innisfree.

Fortunately *The Echo Gate*'s patches of prettiness are too few and far between to detract from the gravity of the main concern: mutability. Poem after poem deals with this in some form – usually by recording transformations within nature. A lapwing's vocal chords become 'a grass blade stretched/Between your thumbs', 'barbed wire rusts/To hay-ropes strung with thorns', and the four-line poem 'Thaw' is a miniature but extremely beautiful summary of the process:

Snow curls into the coalhouse, flecks the coal.
We burn the snow as well in bad weather
As though to spring-clean that darkening hole.
The thaw's a blackbird with one white feather.

Given that Longley sees change more or less wherever he looks, it's not surprising to find him making repeated efforts to establish its opposite. The title poem, 'Home Ground' and 'Mayo Monologues' all seek to define – in various geographical terms – the same sense of permanence that his love poems show him looking for in human relationships. Clearly, there's a political dimension to this. His imagination may be excited by flux, but his heart is set on stability – the more so because of the Troubles which jeopardise it. In this sense, at least, Longley is a war poet, though he's probably fed up with being called one. And the kind of war poetry he writes is one sanctioned by someone whose good influence looms large in the book – Edward Thomas. It has more in it 'of the talk of friends or lovers' than 'the shouting of rhetorician, reciter or politician'.

Where Longley's poems mediate between inner and outer worlds, Graham's concentrate on themselves. The result is only rarely narcissistic; more often it's an absorbed and absorbing effort to map the boundaries of language – which for him have become more definite and restrictive as he's grown older. They're emphasised, no doubt, by his failure to secure a large attentive public; in one late poem he touchingly admits:

Speaking to you and not
Knowing if you are there
Is not too difficult.
My words are used to that.

This imprisonment within the self is all the more distressing for having followed a time of expansive confidence. Throughout the Forties and early Fifties his neo-Apocalyptic sympathies led him to undertake such sustained flights of rhetorical fancy that there seems something penitential about the austerity of his recent work.

Graham's anxiety that 'words make light of us' doesn't become his dominant theme until *The Nightfishing* (1955). The principal reason for its emergence is an enforced preoccupation with loss; his brother's death compels him to examine the limitations of poetry as a means of comfort and communication. In doing so, it forges a link between writing (or speaking) and mortality which holds for the rest of his career. 'The Nightfishing' itself argues that 'each word speaks its own speaker to his death', and almost all his subsequent poems admit that silence continually seeks to dissolve them – as well as their author – and assert its own intransigent permanence.

The fact that 15 years passed before his next collection appeared suggests that it nearly succeeded. But in retrospect Graham seems to have spent the time recreating his confidence in different terms. In *Malcolm Mooney's Land* (1970) and *Implements In Their Places* (1977) he frequently confesses to feeling inadequate and vulnerable, yet insists on remaining talkative. This isn't simply a matter of style – almost unpunctuated stanzas and headlong rhythms – but of content: on every page he recognises the problem of 'having to construct the silence first/To speak out on', and then wrestles with processes of selection and recall to prove the purpose of articulacy. An elegy for Peter Lanyon, 'The Thermal Stair', defines it with resilient conviction:

The poet or painter steers his life to maim

Himself somehow for the job. His job is Love
Imagined into words or pain to make
An object that will stand and will not move.

It's this affection for the world he can never quite express that prevents Graham from merely wandering round in 'the language wood'. People and places repeatedly lure him out of it, and encourage him to prove that his words can deal with happiness, affection and grief as subtly as they can analyse their own shortcomings.

Richard Cork

Haunted Figures

Symbolism by ROBERT GOLDWATER *Allen Lane* £12.95

Art historians rash enough to tackle a subject as complex as Symbolism run the risk of losing themselves in a wilderness of contentious definitions. During the late 19th century a specific movement called Symbolism flourished, but the artists involved with it are often linked with a variety of alternative 'isms' as well. Van Gogh and Munch have been regularly claimed by writers on Expressionism. Seurat is perhaps best-known as a practitioner of Pointillism, although he can equally well be described as the pioneer both of Divisionism and Neo-Impressionism. And a whole host of other painters, Gauguin pre-eminent among them, are poured into the seemingly bottomless hold-all labelled Post-Impressionism. Confronted by such wearisome anarchy, an author might be justified in tipping them all on to a terminological scrap-heap. After all, the meaning of an individual art-work is what really matters, so why lose sight of it in a squabble over jargon?

The most sensible answer is probably to retain the labels which do actually clarify the intentions of the artists they categorise, but to prevent them from dominating our understanding of the works themselves. That, at any

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December Books

The following is a selection of books published during December and received by the NEW STATESMAN. Inclusion in this list does not preclude the possibility of a future review.

Fiction

GEORGE LAMMING **Season of Adventure** *Allison & Busby* £5.95 & £2.95. A novel by the distinguished West Indian author.

HENRI TROYAT **Head in the Clouds** *Aidan Ellis* £6.50. A story of two middle-aged women and the arrival in their lives of a charming young man.

History

KENNETH LUNN & RICHARD C. THURLOW (Eds) **British Fascism** *Croom Helm* £12.95. 'Essays on the radical right in inter-war Britain.'

F. S. L. LYONS **Culture and Anarchy in Ireland 1890-1939** *Oxford* £6.95. In the 1978 Ford Lectures the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, traces the outlines of four cultures co-existing in Ireland.

ROY MEDVEDEV **The October Revolution** *Constable* £6.50. An illustrated account of the October Revolution, with notes and glossary, contrasting it with the events of February 1917.

VIEDA SKULTANS **English Madness** *Routledge* £7.95. A study of the ideas about insanity prevalent from 1580-1890.

ALAN SYKES **Tariff Reform in British Politics 1903-1913** *Oxford* £16. A close examination of the interplay of factions for and against tariff reform during these ten years.

WILLIAM THOMAS **The Philosophic Radicals** *Oxford* £15. Nine studies in theory and practice 1817-1841, looking at individuals, their personalities, their ideas and their relationships within the group.

DENIS TWITCHETT (Ed.) **The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 3** *Cambridge* £35. Part I of the section dealing with Sui and T'ang China 589-906.

Literary Criticism and Poetry

MICHAEL CRAZE **The Life and Lyrics of Andrew Marvell** *Macmillan* £12. A brief outline of Marvell's life is followed by close analysis of 40 poems the texts of which are printed in full.

BRUCE KING (Ed.) **West Indian Literature** *Macmillan* £6.95 & £2.95. An introduction to the history of West Indian writing is followed by chapters on eight major writers.

ELLIOT KRIEGER **A Marxist Study of Shakespeare's Comedies** *Macmillan* £12. 'Professor Krieger's book restores the comedies to the concrete level of social-class relations.'

E. H. MIKHAIL (Ed.) **The Art of Brendan Behan** *Vision Press* £6.95. Pieces about Brendan Behan previously published in various papers are collected here for the first time, divided into reminiscences and critical comments.

MAYA SLATER **Humour in the Works of Proust** *Oxford* £8.50. A thorough , annotated study, with bibliography.

JUNE STEFFENSEN HAGEN **Tennyson and His Publishers** *Macmillan* £12. This examination of Tennyson's relations with his publishers uses previously unpublished personal and business correspondence.

MICHAEL WOLFERS (Ed.) **Poems from Angola** *Heinemann Educational* £1.70. An introduction to the work of 22 Angolan poets covering the last 30 years.

Politics and Current Affairs

NIGEL CALDER **Nuclear Nightmares** *BBC Publications* £6.95. An investigation into possible wars.

KURT DOPFER **The New Political Economy of Development** *Macmillan* £20. 'Integrated theory and Asian experience.'

EVA ETZIONI-HALEVY **Political Manipulation and Administrative Power** *Routledge* £8.95. A comparative study of Britain, the USA, Australia and Israel.

COLIN MACLEAN (Ed.) **The Crown and the Thistle** *Scottish Academic Press* £5. The transcripts of lectures on the nature of nationhood given in Scotland in autumn 1978.

DAVID MCLELLAN **Marxism After Marx** *Macmillan* £8.95. A history of the development of Marxist ideas throughout the world over the last 100 years.

MICHAEL MANDELBAUM **The Nuclear Question** *Cambridge* £12.50. An examination of the development of nuclear armaments in the context of American military strategy and negotiations with the USSR since the end of the second world war.

R. H. TAWNEY **The American Labour Movement and Other Essays** *Harvester* £15.50. A new collection of his writings on labour history.

PAT WALKER (Ed.) **Between Labour and Capital** *Harvester* £12.50 & £4.95. This volume in the Marxist Theory and Contemporary Capitalism series looks at the role of people in jobs which represent neither capital nor labour.

Social Questions and Philosophy

JEAN BAECHLER **Suicides** *Basil Blackwell* £17.50. A detailed study of the causes and contexts of suicide.

MARIOS CAMHIS **Planning Theory and Philosophy** *Tavistock* £9.50. A discussion of the relations between the theory of planning and the philosophy of science.

ANN & MICHAEL CRAFT **Handicapped Married Couples** *Routledge* £9.25. A Welsh study of couples handicapped from birth by mental, physical or personality disorders.

VINIT HASKAR **Equality, Liberty and Perfectionism** *Oxford* £12. A volume in the Clarendon Library of Logic and Philosophy.

ALISTER HARDY **The Spiritual Nature of Man** *Oxford* £6.95. A study of contemporary religious experience by the Director of the Religious Experience Research Unit.

PAUL HOCH **White Hero Black Beast** *Pluto* £8.95 & £3.95. 'Racism, sexism and the mask of masculinity.'

KHALIL NAKHLEH & ELIA ZUREIK (Eds.) **The Sociology of the Palestinians** *Croom Helm* £10.95. Collected essays looking at the Palestinians from a range of sociological points of view.

RICHARD TUCK **Natural Rights Theories** *Cambridge* £10.50. A history of the development of these theories.

TOM WHISTON (Ed.) **The Uses and Abuses of Forecasting** *Macmillan* £15. A critical review of 30 years of forecasting by the staff of the Science Policy Research Unit.

Miscellaneous

JANET FLANNER **Janet Flanner's World** *Secker* £6.95. Uncollected writings 1932-1975 edited by Irving Drutman.

ALBERT ROTHENBERG **The Emerging Goddess** *Chicago* £13.50 A professor of psychiatry's study of the creative process in art, science and other fields, based on interviews and experiments with creative people.

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rate, is the approach adopted by the late Robert Goldwater in *Symbolism*, the latest addition to Allen Lane's distinguished 'Style and Civilisation' series. True, his opening words are forbidding enough to suggest that 'isms' will be as virulent as the measles throughout his text:

> Symbolism, as a movement beginning in the eighties, can be described as a reaction against naturalism which took on its classic form in about 1870 but had its roots in the sixties and, when seen in a larger perspective, was itself the final stage of realism already carried far by the preceding generation.

But after this numbing preamble it becomes mercifully clear that Goldwater just wanted us to swallow the bitter historicist pill as soon as possible, so that he could then get on with the stimulating business of explaining *why* artists felt impelled to reject naturalism.

At once erudite and accessible, Goldwater proves a marvellously sane guide to the motives which give the vague name Symbolism its graspable purpose. The painters and sculptors he discusses shared a dissatisfaction, not only with the fidelity to observed appearances in early Impressionism, but also with more academic kinds of art which illustrated symbolic themes rather than embodying them in an expressive language. Producing a picture stuffed with symbols was not, in their eyes, any guarantee of a good symbolist work. No amount of elaborate allegorical paraphernalia, positioned in the painting like a series of stage props, would suffice unless the work's formal organisation signified the artist's meaning. The symbolist aim was succinctly summarised in 1890 by Maurice Denis, who counselled his fellow Symbolists to 'remember that a picture – before being a war horse, a nude woman or some anecdote – is essentially a plane surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order.'

With hindsight, it is tempting to notice the resemblance between this famous dictum and the apologia for abstraction which would be put forward in the 20th century. But it is vital to remember that Denis does not deny art the right to represent recognisable subjects. On the contrary: Symbolism wanted the artist to explore a rich range of themes, so long as they all became invested with what Goldwater calls 'an emotional idea' and did not pretend that art should imitate nature. A good symbolist painting rejoiced in its independence from reality's outward appearance. But even as it stressed the flatness of a picture-surface, allowed contours to form simplified patterns and released colour from any descriptive role, the larger human significance of art was always the main priority.

Because of its emphasis on a radical language and the imaginative dream, Symbolism would appear to be the work of private, lonely individualists. Goldwater, though, is scrupulously wary of generalisations. He points out that the isolated Symbolist often gravitated towards one of the many artists' colonies founded in regions like Brittany, where community values and the wholeness of peasant life were still considered intact. Strong anarchist beliefs excited many artists during this period, and they viewed the modern industrial city as an alienating evil. Rodin and his friend Carrière were among the artists who joined the short-lived but intriguingly entitled *Club de l'Art Social*, which tried to counteract urban injustice by encouraging workers to see both life and art in a new way.

I would like to find out more about the *L'Art Social* group, but Goldwater's untimely

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death before he completed this text means that it lacks the detailed footnotes and bibliography which Hugh Honour supplied in his excellent *Romanticism*, the last book in the 'Style and Civilisation' series. Nor did Goldwater supply the final chapter, and on page 205 two passages repeat, almost word for word, passages previously found in the first chapter. These anomalies are a pity, but they do not ultimately spoil the real excellence of the book. Goldwater is at his incisive best when he closes in on a single picture like Munch's *Despair*, where the deep perspective shooting past the man on the bridge is fused with a flat, simplified surface design:

> Thus the tension in the pictorial space, whose depth is both stressed and denied, is the visual equivalent of the psychological conflict in the man seen in profile in the foreground, who, isolated in his own thoughts, nevertheless remains painfully conscious of a world from which he is cut off.

Just as Symbolism would have wished, Goldwater explains how the inner meaning of the painting arises straight from its bold formal organisation. And Munch's haunted figure, alone but intensely aware of his larger social context, can stand as an archetype of the Symbolists' dual attitude towards life.

Raymond Mortimer 1895-1980

RAYMOND MORTIMER, who was Literary Editor of the *New Statesman* between 1935 and 1947, died early on Wednesday morning. He would have been 85 in April.

He was not only one of the most distinguished of all literary critics, but also one of the most durable: he had a review in the *Sunday Times* last month, and put in his nominations for the Books of the Year (Soames on Clementine Churchill, David Garnett's *Great Friends*, Hugh Trevor-Roper's abridgment of Macaulay).

Some people said that he had a sharp tongue as a young man, though nobody who knew him in his later years would find that easy to believe. He certainly had great firmness of character, for all his courtesy: indeed, he was prepared to tell Maynard Keynes when he was wrong, which Bertrand Russell said was like 'taking your life in your hands'. (Keynes wanted to base the contributions rate for the NS on his own rate of production, which was several orders of magnitude faster than any normal person's. Mortimer eventually made the great economist accept some part of the facts of journalistic life.)

He was educated at Balliol, and served in the French Red Cross during the First World War. He was a temporary member of the Foreign Office for two years, but apart from that his working life was spent in literary journalism: principally the *New Statesman* and the *Sunday Times*, but also the *TLS* and *Horizon*. He made it quite clear to his friends that he had no wish to go on living if he found himself ill and unable to write, and so the imminence of death did not seem to appal him. He remained, to the end, a firmly convinced atheist.

He was an officer of the Légion d'Honneur, and became a CBE in 1955.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Thomas Elsaesser

German Film Bonanza

Want to make a feature film? Here's what you do . . . Submit your treatment to the National Film Development Fund. Chances are they'll give you £10,000. Prepare a shooting script and a budget sheet. Go to the BFI Production Board, tell them about the cheque from the NFDF and collect another £50,000. Then talk to the Children's Film Foundation, mentioning that your film is about three unemployed school-leavers. That's another £25,000. The National Film Finance Corporation's Project Fund may gladly advance another £50,000, now that the BFI, the NFDF and the CFF have given you interest-free loans. Next, call on the producer of 'Play for Today'. Impressed by your sponsor list, he'll offer you co-production or TV rights worth £40,000. So far, you have £175,000. Still £25,000 short of your £200,000 budget.

Don't bother your rich uncle, and don't take your project to a commercial distributor: he won't even want to know, with all this subsidy money. Instead, *increase* your budget by £40,000 with salaries for your three jobs: script-writer, director, producer. Now you have invested 20 per cent of the production cost yourself. With this you can go, say, to Manchester City Council and tell them the film will be mostly shot on location in the Greater Manchester Area, and your office or lab will also be in Manchester. The Regional Development Fund will agree that your project has the required financial 'Manchester-effect' and you can claim another £25,000 interest-free, with generous repayment conditions.

Well, it can't happen here. But something rather similar is possible in West Germany. For several years now, the New German Cinema of the Seventies has been self-consciously advertising itself as the legitimate heir of the legendary Twenties. Fassbinder, Herzog, Wenders, Schloendorff, Syberberg – the sons of Murnau, Lang, Lubitsch, Pabst? Certainly, these are the names to conjure with at the festivals, but the films, too, are drawing audiences.

Although these different directors have been dubbed 'New German Cinema', no-one is quite sure what they have in common: a 'new irrationalism' (Herzog, Syberberg), a 'new sensibility' (Wenders, Fassbinder, Handke), a 'new realism' (Schloendorff, Kluge), all more or less tenuous labels. What in the *Zeitgeist*, then, accounts for the sudden eruption of film-making talent in a country whose films and industry were the laughing stock of Europe for 25 years? West German film-making is making up for lost time. The star directors are merely the crest of a wave, carried not, as in the case of Hollywood's 'Movie Brats' – Spielberg, Lucas, Scorsese, de Palma – by solid box-office returns or blockbusters, but by a tangled web of film production finance that now supports an output of something like 60 feature films a year in Germany. They are independent productions, in the sense that they are not backed by a commercial production company or a distributor's guarantee.

The actual sources of finance are not all that novel or unorthodox, though the circumstances under which they have become available have recently taken on the shape of a policy. In its 1979 version, the German Film Subsidy Bill is an enlightened piece of legislation by any standards: but its enlightenment has come out of 15 years' bitter struggle between *Jungfilmer*, *Autorenkino* (director's/independent cinema) and the battered remains of a commercial film industry. The battle of words, recriminations, polemics and lobbying goes back to a famous manifesto at the Oberhausen short-film festival in 1962 when it became clear that the government had to mediate by way of legislation.

West German film production today is exemplary not just because it is pragmatic, flexible and a typical example of the grand coalition/social democratic mixed economy approach in action, but because the perennially latent conflict between culture and commerce in matters of film had to articulate itself ideologically, through the legal system, the political life and the federal and regional institutions of the country. Since its inception in 1967, the Film Subsidy Bill has had no fewer than three crucial and controversial revisions (1971, '74, '79), and will again be due for review in 1984.

Almost all West European countries have a form of state subsidy for their film industry. Usually, a combination of fiscal measures, such as reduced VAT, import quotas and a levy on all box-office receipts redistributed to national product as a bonus and incentive for future investment. In Britain, as elsewhere, these were always intended to stem the flood on the open market of Hollywood films, whose technology in production, control of the world's distribution circuits and multi-million box office glamour amounted since the war to an undisputed and unchallengeable superiority. Despite government measures, the decline of the European film industries especially in the Sixties showed that purely economic incentives were inadequate and even inappropriate. In some countries, and Germany is one, relatively easy money via levies, tax concessions and interest-free loans stoked a production boom at a time of important structural changes, when the market was actually shrinking. The results were exploitation pictures: *Dirndl* porn, quota-quickies, spaghetti-westerns.

Basically, the 1967 Film Subsidy Bill in Germany had to build on the levy-plus-tax-rebate principle as a concession to the industry, still adamantly in favour of 'automatic', i.e. box-office oriented subsidy. It came to be known as 'money from the sprinkler hose', because the benefits reached only the biggest plants with the fattest leaves. So as to give an incentive to 'quality' films a lower threshold of

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box-office gross at which automatic subsidy operates was introduced for films that had received either a quality rating from the German equivalent of the Board of Censors, or had won a prize at an international festival. Eventually, the shower of gold (in fact, more a trickle) came down through the rank growth of German sex education films and *Schulmädchenreports* to reach the more delicate blue flowers of culture. Even today almost none of Fassbinder's, Herzog's or Wenders's films would qualify for levy money if it wasn't for these lower thresholds.

However, levy money must be used for future production. A film-maker gets up the subsidy escalator only if he/she is already on it, by at least one film. At the bottom, there is the throng of *Erstfilmer*. How the newcomers managed to climb on throws an interesting light on the institutional dynamics of Germany's state-funded film-making. Because of the country's federal structure, the Bonn government has no jurisdiction over matters of education or culture, which is the province of the individual *Länder*. They had to be nobbled into contributing to a fund administered by a sub-committee of the Standing Conference of Ministers for Cultural Matters. The *Kuratorium Junger Deutscher Film* was set up with the sole aim initially of making loans to promising scripts submitted not by producers but auteur-directors.

Nearly all German film-makers who have come to prominence in the last ten years (and scores more who haven't) had their first film sponsored this way. The loans, invariably written off, were relatively small – around £30-50,000, and like most forms of subsidy available in Germany, the *Kuratorium* favours the standard feature-length fiction film as opposed to documentaries, film-essays or experimental cinema that make up the bulk of subsidised film-making in this country via the BFI and the ACGB. Nonetheless, the *Kuratorium* has the same problems as the BFI Production Board which fills a comparable function in this country: the films only sporadically reach the cinemas, because their necessarily low budgets make them unattractive to commercial distributors.

In the face of mounting criticism, the *Kuratorium* now sets aside funds for seeing a film through right down the line from author to audience, subsidising distribution, publicity, paying for extra copies, sub-titling for export. On his side, the film-maker, in order to receive financial aid earmarked 'culture' has to shoulder the role of the 'artist', with all the ideological baggage this implies. The way out was the way forward: Fassbinder became a superstar, Herzog a visionary.

In practice, distribution problems have meant that the New German Cinema had to be exported and promoted abroad before it even began to find an audience at home. The one distributor that specialised in German films, the *Filmverlag der Autoren* (note the literary bias: 'film-publisher of authors') founded by frustrated film-makers in Munich in 1969, soon had more films than it could successfully market among the small number of studio-cinemas and cine-clubs not tied to an international distributor. Undercapitalised, the *Filmverlag* was bailed out by Rudolf Augstein, of *Der Spiegel*, in 1977, and is now a hard-nosed commercial distributor, much to the dismay of the founding members. Even before the Augstein takeover, however, Fassbinder, Wenders, Herzog had sold films to United Artists and Paramount. It's the next generation that feels the squeeze.

In Germany, the various grant-aid bodies overlap and duplicate their activities especially in the area of production subsidy. Here in Britain, the subsidies are similar – Eady Money, loans and grants from the National Film Finance Corporation, the National Film Development Fund, the BFI Production Board, the Children's Film Foundation – but the applicant opts for one or the other. In Germany you apply to the *Kuratorium*, the Ministry of the Interior, the Film Subsidy Board, or the Development Fund of a *Land*, such as Bavaria, or Berlin, or Hamburg: all for the same project.

By German standards, this seems uncharacteristically inefficient. Fassbinder once said that he can complete a film in the time it takes others to read the small print on the application forms of the grant-aid committees. But the system has its advantages: because the money comes out of so many different pockets – federal, regional, local – and from quite distinct spending authorities – culture and education, regional development, local industrial investment, national trade – the sums are a relatively small item in each budget. For the film-maker it means shopping around and, if necessary, collecting several times over. Diversification spreads the risks more evenly, for the sponsor as well as the producer; the combination, accumulation and circulation of different types of subsidy – prizes, loans, levy-money (up to 80 per cent of the overall production cost) – encourages the kind of initiative on the part of the film-maker that requires forward planning and stimulates productivity on other than a one-off basis, which has dogged independent film production in this country.

In other words, overlap and decentralisation of grant-aid has energised production rather than stifled it. There is even something like competition between different regional authorities: Bavaria, the centre of the German film industry since the Allies dismantled the Berlin-based Ufa after the war, has become worried about the current exodus of film-makers to Berlin, which is enticing them with especially generous loans, if they can provide the *Berlin Effekt*, i.e. attract business and industry to the beleaguered outpost of the Free World.

West Germany is a rich country. Perhaps it can afford to pamper its fledgeling cinéastes. But according to figures about film subsidy in the European Community, Italy spends £28 million a year, Germany £13 million, France £12 million and Britain £11 million, so that while Britain is near the bottom, it is so by quite a small margin. The secret of Germany's success seems to be the mixing of different forms of subsidy, the financing by fund-raising, and the mesh of federal and regional grant-aid within the overall strategy of the Film Subsidy Bill.

In one respect, this picture is seriously misleading. It leaves out what some observers would contend is the most important generator of the New German Cinema. Written into the Film Subsidy Bill is a so-called framework agreement whereby German television underwrites production to the tune of £2-3 million per annum. There is hardly an independent film today that is not co-produced by one of the eight regional and national TV channels, or co-financed by an advance on TV rights. Once a film-maker has done the milk-round of the grant-aid bodies or creamed off the levy premium from his previous film, he would still find himself seriously under-financed if television were not there to top up the pot. Some films are entirely TV-financed, with film-makers retaining theatrical rights and anything between six months and five years to exploit them in the cinemas.

Why can German television be so lavish and unselfish? First, there is no commercial channel as such, each broadcasting authority being a public corporation answerable to the regional government of the day. Television can therefore be brought within the framework of legislation such as the Film Subsidy Bill. Second, German TV channels produce fewer programmes themselves than either ITV or the BBC. Instead they commission or subcontract: with commercial companies or freelance staff. The mechanisms of co-production with an independent producer-director are thus well-established. Third, the entire film- and TV-sector is, by British standards, patchily unionised, giving producers fewer restrictions in respect of crewing or employing semi-professional, non-union labour. Finally, two of the channels, the *Westdeutsche Rundfunk* (Cologne) and *Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen* (Mainz) have as Heads of Film and Drama men who came to the posts via film-criticism and film-making. They are skilful and convinced supporters of the New German Cinema and of independent talent. So, while the five-year agreement between Film Subsidy Board and television guarantees a measure of stability and continuity to TV's role of holding the stirrups for the New German Cinema, providing money, an audience and even a modicum of critical attention on the review pages, there are variables, such as change of government or personnel, that might jeopardise the entire subsidy system.

There is much discussion of the so-called 'amphibious' film, the made-for-the-cinemas-TV-feature. The critics want 'real movies' and are bored with what appears to be the dominant genre coming out of TV co-operation, namely the fictional documentary reminiscent of early Loach/Garnett: case histories, the individual against society and authoritarian institutions. But, in a country where the population is conservative enough to accept quite substantial curtailments of civil liberties if apparently justified in the name of economic stability and prosperity, such films are neither too numerous nor insignificant, even though they do not bring into the cinemas the same numbers as *Cross of Iron*, *Saturday Night Fever* or the latest Louis de Funès comedy.

In Britain, the various White Papers and Interim Reports have perhaps been too eager to find compromises and a centrally administered system. Furthermore, both Labour and Conservative governments have been anxious to disengage the State from any active intervention in the film industry and instead shown a bias towards supervising self-help schemes like the Eady levy. Cultural support has been given, as it were, into the begging bowl at the back door, in the context of education, as with the BFI, or the performing arts, via the Arts Council, and film has for too long figured in a structure of patronage not always adequate or germane to independent film-making, which, as the German experience shows, needs a wider and more flexible framework, so that aid is given not only to production, but to the

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infrastructure, distribution and exhibition, as well.

But the opposition between culture and cash, so boldly debated, may be open to discussion precisely because it is already anachronistic. The German government, by taking responsibility for subsidising a national film culture, has already resolved the contradiction: in practice, culture is a commodity, an industry, a sideshow of the perpetual Eurofair of trade, and film joins the other cottage industries of quaint local crafts. The national heritage is a value, along with other invisible exports, and the autonomy of the artefact, the jealously guarded independence of an artist, as for instance Syberberg sees himself, can also be a prized commercial asset for a government's marketing strategies.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Getting Under the Skin

Much Ado About Nothing by SHAKESPEARE *Warehouse*
Nice by MUSTAPHA MATURA *Riverside*
City Delights *Lyric Studio, Hammersmith*
Aladdin by SANDY WILSON *Lyric, Hammersmith*
The Ancient Mariner adapted by MICHAEL BOGDANOV *Young Vic*
Peter Pan by J. M. BARRIE *Shaftesbury*

'The main pretension in *Much Ado*,' wrote Shaw, off on one of his bard-bashing sprees,

> is that Benedick and Beatrice are exquisitely witty and amusing persons. They are, of course, nothing of the sort. Benedick's pleasantries might pass at a sing-song in a public house parlour; but a gentleman rash enough to venture on them in even the very mildest £52-a-year suburban imitation of polite society today would assuredly never be invited again.

As for Beatrice, with her lubricious badinage, well, 'there is only one thing worse than the Elizabethan "merry gentleman", and that is the Elizabethan "merry lady"'.

Nowadays, we aren't so confident of what Shakespeare's 'pretensions' actually are, nor do we always respect his more discernible aims and intentions in production. Recent directors of *Much Ado* have, rightly or wrongly, tended to make a virtue of what Shaw assumed to be a fault; and Beatrice and Benedick have sometimes emerged as people to be laughed at rather than with, butts rather than wits. But never, I think, has this process come nearer the public-house parlour than in the hands-in-the-pockets, shrug-of-the-shoulders, toss-of-the-vowels and (in short) dedicatedly downbeat production Howard Davies has directed for the RSC.

Kenneth Colley's Benedick, when we meet him, is a petty-minded idler and drone, given to flashing smug, knowing smirks and displaying tiny signs of pleasure in other people's troubles. His fellow-officers not unnaturally have scant respect for him, but they manage to tolerate and even enjoy his ways, having successfully categorised him as the battalion joker. And Charlotte Cornwell's Beatrice is in serious danger of becoming an embittered old maid, coldly hostile to all men, not just to the vexatious Benedick. Her digs at him sound fretful and irritable, his at her jaded, enervated.

The setting is as unromantic as the mood and characters it helps create. Claudio and his chums are early 20th-century partisans, or maybe run-down mafiosi, who have lately slouched out of the hills into a shabby Messina, its mayoral mansion reduced to a few hats and trenchcoats hanging off a cracked wall, its church a couple of rickety chairs, its pomp and circumstance a bunch of balloons and two strips of bunting. Alan Armstrong's Dogberry presumably spends his nights, fully clothed, in a Sally Army hostel. Fred Pearson's droopy-trousered Leonato looks more like a village grocer than a provincial governor. And Clive Merrison's Don Pedro, physically somewhat smarter, turns out to be almost as morally dilapidated as his openly villainous brother, Don John. At any rate, his style is sarcasm, scorn, and a sexual contempt that helps explain and justify the inordinate cruelty of his friend, Claudio, in publicly shaming poor Hero on her wedding day. In this Sicilian dump the men instinctively mistrust the women, and the women have good reason to dislike the men.

It goes without saying that Mr Davies's relentless charmlessness does some damage to the play. The rising violence of Miss Cornwell's voice in the notoriously difficult 'Kill Claudio' scene, the pain that simultaneously distorts her tear-stained face, are both logical enough, given her pent-up misandry and festering resentments: but how could anyone except the most determined nitwit conceivably describe such a Beatrice as being 'a pleasant-spirited lady' or having been 'born in a merry hour'? And should Beatrice's own claim, that a star 'danced' at her birth, really be tossed off so very unemphatically, like a burp embarrassedly smothered? When celebrated lines have to be muted or camouflaged for the sake of consistency, something must be wrong.

And yet much is right. By dint of good acting and the director's persistence, the production remains absorbing and strangely plausible, and by the end has even acquired a degree of depth. Its Benedick, finding he loves and needs, visibly increases in self-respect, dignity and purpose, and its Beatrice, loved and needed, begins warily and touchingly to thaw. Usually, the characters remain relatively fixed. From the start they are two feeling people who haven't yet realised that to get on someone else's nerves may actually be to get under his or her skin. This time, they change, develop, grow, giving us something that might have mollified even GBS, a tale of two dry sticks unexpectedly activated by a late, late spring.

This week's silly question: who is the most likeable, the *nicest*, dramatist presently writing? My nomination would be Mustapha Matura for his benign and unsentimental humour, his relish in the wayward and quirky, his distaste for categorising or condemning. All those qualities are to be found in *Nice* itself, a 40-minute monologue narrated with sly verve by Norman Beaton, playing a genial and optimistic West Indian immigrant. Be nice, he tells his paranoid friend, and the world will be nice back; tolerate, and you'll be tolerated; and, believe it or not, the philosophy works, winning him not only friends but fortune in the form of girls who enthusiastically volunteer to work the streets on his amiable behalf. Yet all along it's evident that something has gone amiss: why else should Mr Beaton be in prison uniform, chatting to us as he empties the institutional tables of the remnants of snout? This ruse gives the evening some necessary tension, but, unluckily and disappointingly, leads to a brusque and shallow denouement, an explanation that is no explanation.

If Mr Matura rejigged and amplified his last five minutes, the result might well be a miniature masterpiece. The punchlines in *City Delights* need far more radical surgery, and so, for that matter, do the sketches that precede them. The subject is London, which is duly defined in terms of exasperating tourists, boorish dinner parties, pigeon droppings and urban violence. One or two items score, notably the Python team's extravagant exposé of avarice in Harley Street, but the evening as a whole is depressingly predictable. It tends to reinforce the notion the Lyric has proclaimed itself determined to disprove, that theatrical evolution has left the art of revue extinct.

Nor, I fear, does Sandy Wilson, of *Boy Friend* renown, succeed in reanimating that endangered species, the pantomime, in the main theatre upstairs. His aim was to substitute some of the *Arabian Nights'* lustre for all those pop songs and jokes about telly commercials; his achievement lacks succinctness, momentum, catchy tunes, funny lines and a good dame. Which leaves me with breath and space only for some admirably encapsulated Coleridge – rich pickings here for both eye and ear – and the weakest of the many half-moribund *Pans* I've seen over the years. The trouble isn't Gayle Hunnicutt, an artless, eager, if not-very-masculine boy-wonder: it is James Villiers's plummy, portly Hook and his hell-crew of improbable weeds and wets. The battle on the pirate ship, in particular, is outrageously lacklustre. The whole thing might have been directed and performed by and for cushions.

Television

Julian Barnes

Freeze Frames

It is one of this column's Rules about Television that any documentary film about Russia which opens with the last movement of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony has an Originality Problem, and is likely to prove not just bad, but instructively bad. The last movement of the Fifth opens with either triumphant jauntiness or (as we are now encouraged to think) ironic jauntiness; but either way, what more inappropriate a backing to a slow opening pan across the facade of *The Hermitage* (BBC-2)? If architecture is frozen music, then a soundtrack of Bird's Eye Vivaldi (or whoever the Russian Vivaldi was) might have been more fitting. And if it *had* to be Shostakovich, then,

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well, he did write that quite well-known symphony called the *Leningrad*, didn't he?

By the end of this intro, it was moderately clear that we were in Russia; but just in case there were any stragglers at the back, we had a dinky shot of the joint compersonnes, Peter Ustinov and Natalie Wood, relaxedly chatting in Russian. A strange idea, to get two expensive English-speaking stars, fly them to Russia, and then get them to speak Russian to one another; but it's probably the TV equivalent of that well-known journalistic ploy called 'getting your expenses in the first para' (in the present case, I'm putting in for a boxed set of Shostakovich symphonies). Ustinov and Wood then began their tour of the museum, lapped round by an implausibly well-tailored rentacrowd. Ustinov pried open a door and whispered, 'The prehistory office'. Inside, a prehistoric attendant picked up the telephone and gave the prehistoric signal: 'Da . . . da . . . da.'

Gradually, it emerged that the Hermitage has quite a few pictures in it: this we deduced from the quick, hosing shots of the walls before the camera settled back on its proper objects of attention – the grizzled Ustinov and the hair-spray ad creature Wood. Between subliminally-appearing pix, they guided us to a charming Wedgwood dinner service, an elaborate clock with its devoted winder ('He remembers winding it for Tito, Indira Gandhi and Harold Wilson . . .') and a 'children's painting room' where hand-picked cuties were turning out views of the Storming of the Winter Palace (in reality, as limp an affair as the Storming of the Bastille).

All the time, Natalie Wood kept changing her clothes (not, I hasten – and regret – to add, on screen). At a rough count she changed them even more often than Barry Norman did in the early episodes of *The Hollywood Greats,* before the series could afford a continuity person. Somehow, Miss Wood hadn't quite brought the right togs for a day's leisurely browsing in the Hermitage; she seemed to have mistakenly packed the wherewithal for a week's filming of After Eight ads. One moment the screen was ashimmy with lurex, the next it was hair up, cleavage down and black chiffon round the rest for the gem room. She even tossed in what Barry Norman wouldn't dare risk: a sudden dive into a bubble-cut half way through. Fair enough to employ Ustinov and Wood as fairground barkers outside the Booth of Culture; a bit much, when you've paid your money and gone inside, to find that the show largely consists of the two barkers themselves.

Ustinov padded round like a dancing bear in an old print, occasionally humming to himself; Miss Wood, wobbly-voiced, violently mimed responses to the various works of art. In front of the Scythian gold, she acted 'being shocked at the brute realism of all this old stuff': her eyelids flipped up and open like the hideaway headlights in a Barry Lategan Renault ad. And then, after one hour and 22 minutes, we got, briefly, to the Picassos and Matisses, and were shown Cézanne's 'Woman in Blue' from sideways and below in a cute nostril-shot. Eight minutes later, this Moscow-Munich-NBC-BBC co-production ended with praise of Soviet art-collecting and the guffy piety that the Hermitage 'is symbolic of a desire for culture to be continuous'. Soviet art-collecting, of course, consisted merely of nationalising the property of two brilliant collectors, salting the stuff away, selling off bits of it to the West during cash-flow crises, and finally bringing it out as a tourist attraction. As for 'continuous culture', the concept has memorably involved hearing the word art and reaching for your bulldozer.

A pussy-footnote on matters Soviet came on the *News* this week from President Carter. Students of White House psycholinguistics will recall how difficult Henry Kissinger found it to say 'I/He lied', choosing instead the formulations 'That was not a correct statement' and 'That was a hyperbole'. Carter, quizzed by a CBS interviewer about his hotline talk with Brezhnev, was put on the spot with a 'He's lying, isn't he, Mr President?' Falteringly, the reply came: 'He is aw not aw telling the aw facts adequately, that aw is the case.' It made you disproportionately relieved at the plain-speaking of Carter's fellow-countryman Peter Fleming in the *Braniff Airways World Doubles* (BBC-1). Justly enraged by the antics of Nastase and that Borstal boy of British tennis, Buster Mottram, Fleming finally blew his college-boy cool. The lanky Adonis bellowed down the court (and the mikes weren't quite muffled enough), 'Fuck you, asshole', and followed it with what David Vine primly called 'a gesture making his feelings felt'. This column applauds the content and is fairly sympathetic to the style too.

Records

Andrew Clements

Radical Re-creation

There are conductors who readily take to the recording studio; there are others – diminishing in number all the time – who still regard it with suspicion. Carlos Kleiber falls very firmly into the latter category: a few releases – glorious versions of *Der Freischutz* and *La Traviata*, the finest discs of Beethoven's Fifth and Seventh Symphonies for well over a decade – but also long periods of silence. A promised recording of *Wozzeck* has not yet appeared, the Beethoven cycle seems to have stopped. But now we have a coupling of Schubert's Third and Eighth Symphonies, in which Kleiber conducts the Vienna Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon 2531 124), that at the same time affirms and tantalises our expectations. Schubert's Third is a perilously fragile framework for Kleiber to build his typically taut, dramatic interpretations upon; the extremes of tempo (particularly in the central movements) threaten to inflate when they should point up, the period style is all but lost. But the performance remains that of a great conductor in its sound-world and dramatic grip, and the *Unfinished* on the reverse of the disc is given a Gothic intensity, sudden new perspectives on a piece that seemed totally familiar. No other living conductor would attempt quite such a radical re-creation.

It has, in fact, been a happy quarter for recordings of the 19th-century symphonic repertory. Riccardo Muti has continued his cycle of the Schumann symphonies with the First (*Spring*) coupled with Mendelssohn's Fifth (*Reformation*) on EMI (ASD 3781). The results have so far been quite as good as in his parallel Tchaikovsky series, though whether the present issue recommends itself depends on how seriously one can take the Mendelssohn work, with its odd concoction of Lutheran religiosity and symphonic working – the 'Dresden Amen' occurs three times in the first movement (later to be incorporated so memorably into *Parsifal*), the finale is built upon the chorale *Ein feste Burg*. One criticism that can be made of Muti's Schumann is that he tends to drive the faster music a little too fast, losing some of its charm in the process, but when the symphonies are boxed they will form a real alternative to Barenboim's set for Deutsche Grammophon. A pity though tha Muti could not have been persuaded to recor some of Schumann's more neglected orches tral music rather than the Mendelssohn.

For a number of years Rafael Kubelik' Schumann cycle (also for DG) held sway, bu its replacement for CBS (79324, three record including the *Manfred* Overture as fill-up) i disappointing. The orchestra is the Bavaria Symphony, and in that lie most of the prob lems. Kubelik's interpretations are usually dis tinguished by his ability to steer the sensibl middle course, to avoid exaggeration and t obtain warmth and naturalness; he does all c these at times during the symphonies bu never throughout an entire work. Th orchestra's phrasing lapses too easily int dullness, ensemble is occasionally questior able and the strings lack the sheen of the be orchestras. In the concert hall they woul prove satisfying enough, but for repeated lis tening we have come to expect better.

Bernard Haitink's new version of Bruck ner's Seventh Symphony (Philips 6769 02 two records) is likewise a replacement, but i this case the result only goes to improve upo what was already a top-class performance. I both cases the orchestra has been the Cor certgebouw of Amsterdam, and the newe version takes advantage of the refinements i recorded sound in the intervening doze years. Haitink's view of the symphony ha evidently both broadened in perspective an sharpened in detail: passing incidents are no more sharply etched, while the wonderfi opening theme of the first movement unfol yet more unhurriedly. Even in such a superic performance I find the final bars unconvin ing, though the fault is mainly Bruckner' Jochum's recording is still highly recommen able – a marvellous example of the ol 'plastic' school of Bruckner conducting – bu among newer versions there's little to choos between von Karajan and the new Haitin Both have *Siegfried Idyll* on the fourth side

Among the wealth of choral discs releas in the pre-Christmas period it's difficult choose a representative selection. Two issu stand out. Peter Conrad discussed the ne Boston recording of Schoenberg's *Gurrelied* a few weeks ago in these columns (Philij

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6769 038, two records); Ozawa turns it into a last outpost of German Romanticism, the background against which Schoenberg was to forge his revolution. This seems to me the right way with a score which can sound grotesquely overblown in less compassionate hands. The soloists are almost uniformly marvellous, the recording – at a public concert – does not intrude at all. Riccardo Muti (clearly not a conductor shy of the recording studio in any way) has now added a recording of the Requiem to his previous series of Verdi (EMI SLS 5185, two records) which threatens to sweep all before it, even one's most hallowed preferences for Giulini in this work. Muti has the benefit of the best possible recording and well matched soloists – Renata Scotto, Agnes Baltsa, Veriano Luchetti and Yevgeny Nesterenko – among whom Scotto and Nesterenko are quite outstanding. At times Muti almost aims for physical excitement and dramatic pace at the expense of majesty and warmth: the *Dies Irae* storms along as fast as the Philharmonia orchestra's strings can carry it and faster perhaps than the Ambrosian and Philharmonia Choruses might like. Yet the whole effect is entirely coherent and convincing: in the last resort the Verdi Requiem stands or falls by its ability to marry dramatic craft with religious text; and Muti achieves the balance most exactly.

Carlo Maria Giulini is so circumspect in his recording work that his most famous interpretations take many years to reach disc, Mozart longest of all. The release of the Requiem K626 is thus an event (EMI ASD 3723); a performance in the grand manner, extravagantly operatic at times. It compels attention by its obvious affection and concern to maintain the continuity of the lyrical flow (though never at the expense of the meaning of the text); only occasionally is there a sense that respect for the music has prevented Giulini from extracting its maximum impact.

Regrettably Lorin Maazel's new Berlioz Requiem is not to be classed with the previous choral discs (Decca D137D 2, two records). Recorded in Cleveland with the Cleveland Orchestra and Chorus, it is unforgivably prosaic at all the points at which Berlioz's invention is at its most original and thrilling – almost as though Maazel had set out to prove the emptiness of this grandiose score.

Apart from an important batch of releases of British music with which I hope to deal separately in a future column, the current crop of 20th-century music is fairly familiar stuff. A record of early, almost prehistoric, Bartok is an exception (Decca SLX 6897), excellently played by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra under Antal Dorati. I doubt that many people would guess the composer of the Suite No. 1, Opus 3, the orchestration modelled on Richard Strauss perhaps, the cast of the melodies suggesting something from central Europe; it is not a work one would want to hear very often, though coupled with the Two Pictures Op. 10, which could only have been written by Bartok, it neatly demonstrates the development of the composer in five years. Yet another recording of the complete music Stravinsky wrote for *The Firebird*, this time from Colin Davis and the Concertgebouw (Philips 6500 637), leads me to confess the heresy of preferring the Suite to the entire ballet. There is much padding in the ballet as a whole, perhaps the only instance in Stravinsky's enormous output when his facility outstripped his judgment. If you require the complete work, then Davis's version is superbly played and precisely imagined.

The sound quality of even the best of this quarter's records is put in the shade of EMI's own entry into the digital recording field with a disc of Debussy's orchestral *Images* and *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune* by the London Symphony Orchestra and André Previn (EMI ASD 3804). The performances do little to convince me that Previn is a conductor able to turn his hand to the whole spectrum of the orchestral repertoire instead of remaining a specialist in choice corners of the early 20th century, but the results of the digital technique are so spectacular as to demand a hearing. The dynamic range of the recording is quite unparalleled (almost too great if one's listening room is small or one's neighbours small-minded), and the clarity of the textures and the differentiation of orchestral timbres an improvement even on earlier digital discs. One hopes that EMI utilise the benefits of their new expertise as quickly as possible, and on the widest range of repertoire.

Films

John Coleman

Flotsam and Jetsam

Hot Stuff and **Steel** (AAs) *Classic, Leicester Square; Scene*
Time After Time (AA) *Warner West End*
The Amityville Horror (X) *London Pavilion*
Night Games (X) *Prince Charles*

Thank God for Dom DeLuise. If a fellow had a sense of going out of his mind with reason (this openers-and-beginners-please time of the season), the smiley anxiety which is Mr DeLuise at his high best was there to condone, confirm and – even, sweetly – contradict it. That incorrigible meek dumpling of a persona, capable of fits of rage but then somehow scared rotten by the outcome, or maybe the sheer fact of them, has turned itself to directing a first feature, *Hot Stuff*.

The story, set in Miami and based on a very rude approximation to what a hand-out attempts to persuade the eager reader is reality, whirls around a quartet of cops who are given unofficial permission to cop out: set up a dirty-money 'discount centre', or you-bring-we'll-buy fences' store. To it streams a lovely, well-assorted, funny flotsam and jetsam of criminality – an updated Runyonesquerie of little and larger crooks, with hot tellies, pathetic baubles, and serious items like drugs. A camera, controlled by the delicious Suzanne Pleshette (assuredly the most underpromoted sexy comedienne of our time), is taking this for the record: it is a fairly moral affair for an amusement – well, approximately, given its dubious premises. Mafia-nonsense intervenes; there are the car chases which are the current equivalent of flying custard-pies, and infinitely more boring; there are, however, a whole lot of wonderfully giggly sketches, comic notions that if not entirely coming together to make this a sustained business give one the business often enough to be grateful. And a further cause for applause is how many of the faces and voices came fresh to these bleared British eyes.

An unspeakable but, alas, not unspoken rubbish called *Steel* accompanies this. A quantity of men are here seen on display from a number of camera angles that shall be uncounted (amazing it sometimes is, but is it art?), working on a building in old Kentucky. George Kennedy, Art Carney and another of those superish ladies that have made watching crap at least endurable, Jennifer O'Neill, are present. The only other available praise for this is that it revolves around a magnificent erection, scrabbled over by mite-like weenies.

Meanwhile, there is a monumentally good thing in a different sense. That it doesn't quite make it has to be ascribed to its writer/director Nicholas Meyer probably sensing just what a jolly wheeze he was on to and overdoing it a shade. It is also hard to maintain an aura of gaiety around David Warner as Jack the Ripper. The rest, or much of it, is genuinely inventive. H. G. Wells, in the moustached and highly attractive and profoundly unconvincing presence of Malcolm McDowell (the lack of conviction merely stems from the improbability of casting anyone at all except Wells as Wells), finds himself steering that Time Machine you may recall he wrote about in punitive search of D. Warner (Stevenson, aha, the smiler with the little knives) into the 20th century. *Time After Time* is clearly on for being a very meritable and rich hunting-ground for Mark Twainish larks, in reverse. Some of the potential is quite beautifully trapped: poor, deerstalker-topped H.G. or McDowell having to learn to cope with oddities and inventions like the phone, telly, automobile and Women's Lib. Sensibly, on the writer's part, an awkward moment on a sofa to one side, he twigs the last fastest. Someone has done his homework here. A pity, I thought, that the ugliness of finally caught Ripper had to be quite so nasty; a pity, maybe, about the beastly authenticity allowed him all the way. But the gags about subways and stuff are fine and – there will yet more of this – Mary Steenburgen steals this show, as she did in Jack Nicholson's *Goin' South*, which – heaven knows – was there for the stealing.

There has been a great deal more publicity about *The Amityville Horror*, a sublimely silly length of gothic, than house-agents with ghosts on their books deserve. Its only interesting occurrence is a lady called Margot Kidder – and, given the haunted futility in which she has been sited, her parents must have had foresight. As bumps in the night and something repellent in the basement and a priest who should have been unfrocked at birth and a very very nasty loo – full of something black, viscous and coming *up* – go, this goes. You want, go see. It ties a fistful of elegant, wriggling fingers with Roger Vadim's *Night Games*, a title he or his producers might have checked out with Mai Zetterling, whose proffer – if memory serves me right – was obscener in a more grown-up fashion. The Vadim, come to that, is all fashion: ultra-ultra chic to the point of sic (sick). A lady has problems – my goodness, she does – and her name is Cindy Pickett in real life, wherever that may be currently located, and (I warned I was going to commit at least a triple fellowny) she is simply splendid-looking, could – one

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imagines – act up a storm if demanded. Here, nothing is demanded save stripping, mind-slipping, behaving as if flashbacks come naturally and generally miming the 33 faces of Eve. Vadim, no one's fool when on his way to a dollar, uses her shamelessly. Apologies: I forgot to say. The film is not about nothing. It is about high-class window-dressing: maybe widow-dressing, taken that M. Vadim has settled in the States for good, *on me dit.*

Weekend Competition

No 2599 **Set by Paddy Beesley**

Terry Jones, of Monty Python fame, has just written a book on Chaucer. What next – Larry Grayson on the Dark Lady of the Sonnets? We'd like you to send extracts of up to 120 words from imagined 'scholarly' works by any living British comedian. By 25 January.

No 2596 **Set by Peter Alexander**

We wanted punned haiku.

Report **By Frank Shortstraw**

No room for me. A quid a triplet for you.

Please, Alexander
Set a chap an easier
Comp – something blander.

That girl Amanda
Tells boys I'm a proper goose.
Base propaganda!

ROBERT BAIRD

Virginal and prim
The young bride watching her groom
Thinks, 'Aisle, Altar, Hymn.'

JOHN SWEETMAN

Re gravitation,
Newton was the man who gave
It appellation.

Our local is packed –
Bubbling Brown Sugar is an
Afro dizzy act.

Helen away, us
Girls have plenty of lovers
And Menelaus.

A. J. WYBORN

Loose Ern's paradise
Is in Switzerland – it's a
Bed of idle vice.

Fortune is fickle,
Fork out some dough or some bread
Or pump a nickel.

Did Queen and Prince prize
Their Christmas fare, or bluntly
Ignore the Min spies?

JOYCE JOHNSON

In *The Maid of Pskov*
Rimsky could not sing, as he
Had, of course, a cough.

O Anastasia!
I die! But I'd far rather
Have you than Asia!

W. MAY BYRON

Fiercer than Dilley,
Hot stuff, breathing fire, Aussies
Can pick a Lillee!

Streets ahead, Willey
And Lillee put in the shade,
We pick a Dilley!

GAVIN EWART

Naval Histories
For easy reference list
Sailors' indices.

Yoghourt, you'll agree,
Is nice iced, so in the Alps
Avalanche of Ski.

Brass bands always hum
Stout tunes through your receiver
If euphonium.

BILL GREENWELL

When the day dawned dim
I slipped from my sheets and left –
Eiderdown on him.

MARY HOLTBY

Any house of sin
Made Henry the Eighth enthuse,
'Pray let's amble in.'

RUSSELL LUCAS

He is not a Freud
Of sex – he's far too Jung, and
Otherwise employed.

People whose bent is
To write silly things like these –
Known compers' mentis?

WENDY COPE

Tight pants (so Latin)
That shine across the bottom
Are often satin.

Mussels as a rule
Are very hard to open –
Stubborn as a moule.

DAVID PHILLIPS

Between lustful sheets
If you would not breed trouble
Avoid Spiro Keats.

He's at it again,
Drinking to drown some woe but
It's only sham pain.

ANDRÉE TREE

How come cuts leave us
Firing scores of artists yet
Not singein' Stevas?

W. J. WEBSTER

Vivaldi's a lark
Sometimes confused with Mozart
But not Offenbach.

E. O. PARROTT

Her start was shady
But our flower-girl ended
As Mayfair Lady.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

A fair Muscovite
Hustled so hard they called her
A stark-of-a-night.

T. GRIFFITHS

Men prevaricate.
Even a priest may not be
Always a curate.

For several coins
In girlie magazines you
Read between the loins.

BOB SCOTT

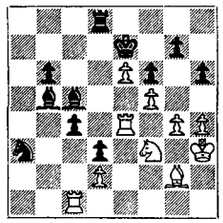
An early bird, Kate
Is abed by nine. But, boy,
Does she scintillate!

ALASTAIR CHAMBRE

Tony Miles
Chess

No 162 **More rivalry in Buenos Aires**

Undoubtedly the most sensational game of the Buenos Aires Clarin tournament was the victory of the young World Cadet (under-17) Champion Marcelo Tempone over the ex-world champion Tigran Petrosian.This game must be the ultimate failure of the technique as Tempone had just ½/7 before it! Even at the adjournment (see diagram) no one expected that it might be a sensation.



After... **B-R3** there seemed to be no defence to the advance of the QNP. However, during the adjournment Tempone found the only counter-chance and, from his casual play, it would seem that Petrosian missed it.

The game continued **42 . . . B-R3; 43.P-N5, P-R4** (taking away the entry squares on the KN file) **44.R-B1! B-N2; 45.R(4)-K1, B-Q4?** (very mysterious) **46.N-K5!** (The point of White's play.) **BxBch; 47.KxB, PxN; 48.RxP** (now the White pawns are the most potent force) **R-KB1; 49.R-Q5, B-Q3; 50.R-QR1, P-ON4** (if . . . P-N3; 51.RxN! BxR; 52.R-Q7ch, K-K1; 53.P-B6 wins) **51.K-B3, R-QN1, 52.K-K4, P-N5; 53.R-R5, P-N6?** (Conceding the seventh rank is astonishing, though on . . .R-N2 presumably Black feared 54.K-Q5 followed by R-KB1 and P-B6ch) **54.R-R7ch, K-B1; 55.P-B6, P-N3** (. . . P-N7 is consistent but after 56.R-B7ch, K-N1 – K-K1, PxP – 57. R-Pch, K-R1; 58.R-KB1, P-N8=Q; 59.RxQ, RxR; 60.P-N6 the avalanche decides. Now Black is clearly coming second in the race) **56.K-Q5, N-N4; 57.R-R7, K-N1; 58.R-N7ch, K-R1; 59.R-K1, B-B1; 60.R-Q7, P-B6; 61.P-K7, PxP; 62.PxB=Qch, RxQ; 63.R(1)-K7 Resigns.**

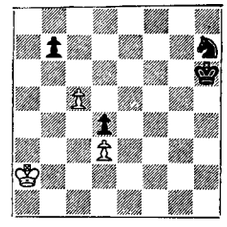
The best game of the event:

White: B. Ivkov **Black: F. Gheorghiu**

1.P-Q4, N-KB3; 2.P-QB4, P-B4; 3.P-Q5, P-KN3; 4.N-QB3, B-N2; 5.P-K4, P-Q3; 6.N-B3, 0-0; 7.P-KR3, P-K3; 8.B-Q3, PxP; 9.KPxP, R-K1ch; 10.B-K3, P-QN4!? A double edged choice. In an earlier round Spassky tried . . . B-R3. 11.NxP. N-K5; 12.0-0, BxNP. Perhaps . . .P-QR3 is better. **13.BxN! RxB.** . . .BxR is too dangerous. **14.Q-B2, RxB; 15.QxB, RxN.** Missing White's reply, though . . . R-K1; 16.QR-L1 is clearly good for White. **16.KR-K1!!** A lovely move; ignoring all the fireworks White quietly takes over the K.file. Now if . . .R-B3 (or B4) 17.N-B7 or . . .Q-B3; 17.QxQ, RxQ; 18.R-K8ch wins. **16. . . .B-Q2; 17.PxR, Q-N4ch; 18.K-R1, N-R3; 19.NxQP, BxP.** Or . . . Q-B5; 20.Q-K5, QxPch; 21.K-N1, BxP; 22.Q-N3 winning. **20.R-KN1(?)** A pity. 20.Q-R8ch! would have bean a fitting conclusion. **20 . . .Q-B5; 21.R-N3, QxN; 22.RxB, R-K1; 23.K-N2, P-R4.** Black could resign – he is the exchange down and his N is a passenger. **24.Q-B3, N-B2; 25.R-K1, R-Q1; 26.R-R4, N-K1; 27.R(R)-K4, Q-N1; 28.R-K7, N-Q3; 29.Q-B6, R-KB1; 30.Q-B4, R-Q1; 31.R(1)-K6! PxR; 32.Q-B6 Resigns.**

Problem 162

White to play is a piece down, but the Black king is out of play. Can he make use of this? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN post-marked no later than 23 January.



Solution to problem 160

Yes: **1.N-R4! K-N6; 2.B-Q2! B-Bich** (or . . .KxN; 3.B-K1ch, K-R4; 4.P-N4ch, K-R6; 5.K-B6 mating) **3.K-N5, P-R3ch; 4.K-R5, B-N5ch; 5.KxP, KxN; 6.B-K1 Mate.**

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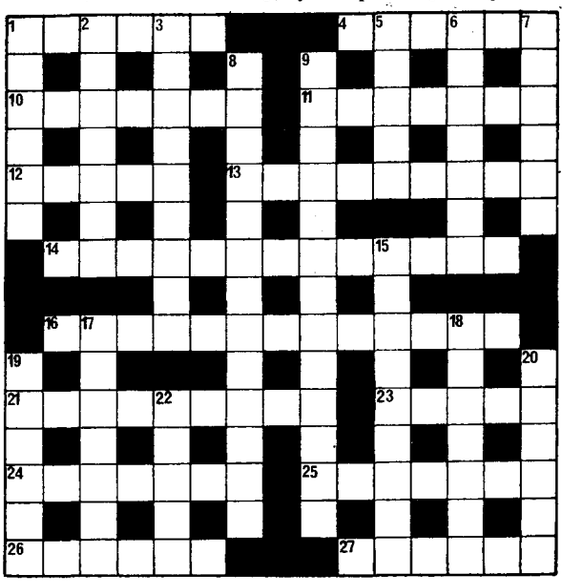
Weekend Crossword 1329

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1329, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 22 January.



ACROSS

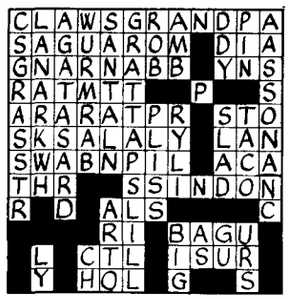
1 Lust makes one look about in the same place (6).
4 Disappeared when inclined? (6).
10 Game preserve as expression of gratitude (7).
11 In most of the poem the composer exaggerated (7).
12 'Virtue cannot live out of the ——— of emulation' *(J. Caesar)* (5).
13 Drug given for the unpleasant experience a cockney endured (9).
14 Electricity as anaesthetic – see this issue! (7, 6).
16 Victor beheaded by a man and his wives somewhere in Scotland (5, 8).
21 Food as cut during the reduction (9).
23 Politician who takes the tide in his affairs? (5).
24 Stumble on crude oil somewhere in Africa (7).
25 Book needed here and now (7).
26 God put me in a woman's (6).
27 Seats with a high middle (6).

DOWN

1 Put the company back among those delayed (6).
2 Fillet in which back of hand is held by lover (7).
3 A penny is the price for liberation (9).
5 Subject being backed in the privilege I list (5).
6 Relative idler becomes innkeeper (7).
7 The plant to tremble (6).
8 He can't loan his confounded money immediately (4, 2, 3, 4).
9 Register with a goat for something to eat (4, 3, 6).
15 Rope which keeps mother inside the bedding? (9).
17 Potentially retains what is more unpleasant (7).
18 The wrong way to be successful with a man, but it's only a matter of time (7).
19 Drink often associated with the hop (6).
20 When he's put back, he's done wrong (6).
22 Bolt or unlock after the French rising (5).

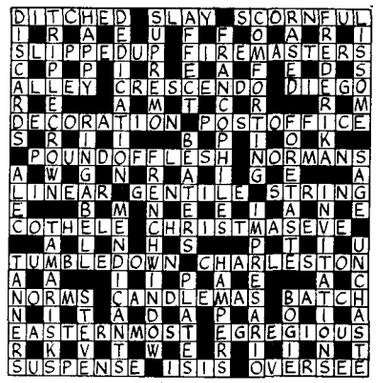
SETSQUARE

Solutions to Christmas puzzles



Prizewinners to Salamanca 25

C. I. Semeonoff (Edinburgh)
P. Murphy (London SW1)
E. A. P. Ward (Warlingham)
Richard Ellis (Manchester)
Eileen Brunton (Sible Hedingham)



Prizewinners to No 1327

Tony Jaques (Brentwood)
Mrs Wells (Nottingham)
M. C. Marks (Melbourne)
D. Page (London SW2)
Mrs Blauner (New York)

APPOINTMENTS

GENERAL AND MUNICIPAL WORKERS' UNION

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The G.M.W.U. has an expanding education service for its shop stewards and a vacancy has arisen for an Education Assistant at Grange College, Hale, Cheshire.

The College primarily organises shop steward courses on subjects related to trade unionism and industrial relations and the person appointed will be required to lecture on these.

Candidates must show some evidence of having worked in the trade union movement and of having either participated in trade union training schemes or of having suitable academic qualifications.

Starting salary is £4,989 p.a. rising to £6,162 p.a. (review April 1980).

Applications with a curriculum vitae should be made to **Personnel Manager, G.M.W.U., Thorne House, Ruxley Ridge, Claygate, Esher, Surrey KT10 0TL. (Tel. No. Esher 62081 Ext. 89).**

Closing date: 25 January 1980.

Child Poverty Action Group

is looking for an

AUDIO TYPIST

to start work immediately in their busy but friendly and informal office. Salary £4,164. Hours 9.30-5.30. 4 weeks holiday p.a. For further details please contact: **Claire Furlong on 01-242 3225.**

BARRISTERS' CHAMBERS require a Junior Clerk: varied work, needing energy and initiative, with career training and good prospects. Salary by arrangement. Write: Senior Clerk, Cloisters, 1 Pump Court, Temple, London EC4Y 7AA.

BARRISTERS' CHAMBERS require a Receptionist/Clerk to look after clients, solicitors, callers, telephones, messages, ledgers and briefs. Salary by arrangement. Write: Senior Clerk, Cloisters, 1 Pump Court, Temple, London EC4Y 7AA.

THE LABOUR PARTY

requires

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in the **GENERAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.**

Duties include servicing the statutory Committees of the National Executive Committee and assisting the Administrative and Personnel Officer with certain tasks. The successful applicant will have experience in compiling minutes and agendas and will need to be a competent shorthand-typist.

Salary range: £5,505 - £6,095 p.a., dependent on appropriate experience in a similar capacity. LVs provided. 33¾ hr week.

Application forms and conditions of employment can be obtained from:

The Administrative and Personnel Officer,
The Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JA.
Tel: 01-834 9434.

Completed application forms should be returned by **Friday, 1 February 1980.**

UNA International Service

Second Programme Officer for Latin America

To work as part of a small team in the planning and administration of volunteer programmes and with special responsibility for general recruitment. Overseas experience, understanding of development problems in Latin America and fluency in Portuguese or Spanish required. The job is based in London. Salary from £4,300 (including London Weighting).

Field Officers

required for the development and administration of volunteer programmes in Brazil and Mali. Overseas experience and linguistic ability essential. Volunteer terms of service.

Applications: **UNAIS, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL. Telephone 01-930 0679.**

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3W1 THIRD WORLD FIRST

The national student-based campaign against world poverty, requires new workers. Applicants should be committed to the aims of 3W1, proven efficient organisers with a good knowledge of the student movement in Britain. Knowledge of development issues an advantage.

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2) Field Officers

3W1 is looking for people to join the Field Unit. Field Officers are responsible for helping local 3W1 groups in colleges to organise events on international issues, starting up new groups and generally promoting 3W1 within a given geographical area.

Salaries/Conditions

Both appointments are on a scale £3,500 - £5,900 according to age and experience for a 35 hour week. Travelling expenses are paid. Both posts are Oxford based.

Please write to **3W1 (Staff Appointments), 232 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1UH or phone 0865 45678** for application forms. Closing date for applications: **7 February 1980.**

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For more information and informal discussion prior to application please contact Mr M. Booth, Regional Director of Social Work, (Dept NST), Highfield, Ambrose Lane, Harpenden, Herts AL5 4BX. Tel: Harpenden 4688.

Application forms from Staffing Secretary, National Children's Home, 85 Highbury Park, London N5 1UD.

NACRO

Education Development Officer

We are looking for an Education Development Officer to specialise in adult basic education (literacy, numeracy, life and social skills) for offenders. The successful applicant will be mainly involved in helping projects which deal with offenders to introduce adult basic education. This will be done by working with individual projects, running training programmes for project staff and producing information material.
Experience of work of this sort essential. The post is funded initially for three years and can be based in London or Manchester.
Salary on scale starting at £7,200 + £780 London Weighting (if appropriate).
Further details and application form from: **Robert Beech, Secretary, NACRO, 169 Clapham Road, London SW9 0PU.**
Closing date: **23 January 1980.**
Interviews will be held in **London 29 January 1980.**

National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders

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HIGHLANDS, Romford
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NEWLANDS, Sevenoaks
A **Deputy Warden** is required for this long stay therapeutic community for adults.

TULATH, Swansea
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CRESCENT HOUSE, Bayswater
A **Warden** is required for this residential therapeutic community for people with mixed social behavioural problems of dependency, primarily ex drug abusers.

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For information and application forms contact: **The Personnel Assistant, The Richmond Fellowship, 8 Addison Road, London W14 8DL. Tel: 01-603 6373.**

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AA

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Research in Economics of Islam

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The Muslim Institute has been offered funds from a private source to set up a small team for such fundamental research. We would like to hear from academics/research students who might be interested. Knowledge of Arabic and ability to consult original sources is desirable. Research already in progress covers the Seerah and the 'social sciences'. Please send detailed CV to the **Director, Dr Kalim Siddiqui,** in envelope marked **'Economics.'**

The Muslim Institute, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DS.

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Theatres

ALDWYCH (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. (No perfs 14-18 Jan.). Reduced price previews 'The Greeks' 19 Jan. Pt 1 'The War', 22 Jan. Pt 2 'The Murders' 25 Jan. Pt 3 'The Gods' 26 Jan. Pt 1 'The War'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in 'Much Ado About Nothing'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. Nimrod Theatre of Australia presents 'The Club' by David Williamson, dir. John Bell. Prevs 17-20 Jan. 8 p.m. Press night 21 Jan. 7 p.m. subs Mon.-Sat. 8 p.m. Sat. mat. 4.30.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Undiscovered Country', 'The Wild Duck', 'Death of A Salesman', 'When We Are Married', 'The Long Voyage Home'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

NEW END. 794 0238. 'Heroes' by Doug. Lucie. Tues.-Sun. 8 p.m. Last week.

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18 Feb.—'Representation: A Multiple Function'.
25 Feb.—'A Hypothetical Model of Language in Psychoanalysis'.
3 Mar.—'Tertiary Processes and Symbolisation'.
10 Mar.—'Identity and Difference'.
17 Mar.—'Madness and Psychosis'.

ADMISSION FREE, WITHOUT TICKET.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. 15 Jan. 'Is There a Microprocessor in the House?' by Professor A. L. Cullen; 17 Jan. 'Games are Serious Matters' by Professor C. A. B. Smith. Admission free. Details of Public Lectures from Publications Office (send stamped envelope).

SOCIETY FOR COOPERATIVE STUDIES. Prof. Tony Eccles on 'The Lessons of the KME Co-operative'. Wed. 16 Jan. 6 p.m. at the College for the Distributive Trades, Leicester Square. Adm. free. All welcome.

ICA EVENTS. The Mall, SW1. 15 Jan. 7.30 Moholy-Nagy Talks: Quentin Hughes 'The Idea of a Workshop'. 80p. 930 3647.

TIGRAI TODAY: A struggle for National Liberation in Ethiopia. Talk by Kirsty Wright, Africa Centre, 38 King Street, WC2. 16 Jan. 6.30. Adm. 50p.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme. Sun. 13 Jan. 8 p.m. Open Q/A Meeting 'Psychic Laws and Phenomena'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gdns, London W2.

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